



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>



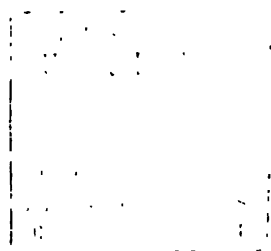
CAPTAIN PETE
of
CORTESANA
JAMES COOPER WHEELER

FRED LOCKLEY
RARE WESTERN BOOKS
4227 S. E. Stark St.
PORTLAND, ORE.

2m13

1. No subject

NCW

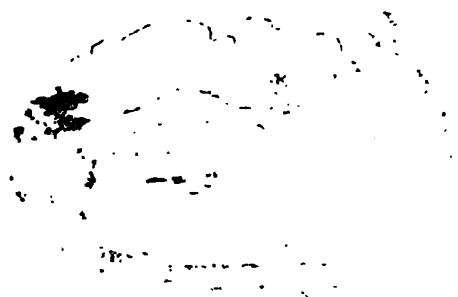




CAPTAIN PETE AND TOM WENT TO WORK WITH GREAT ENERGY.

CAPTAIN PETE OF CORTESANA

BY
JAMES COMPTON WHEELER
AUTHOR OF "THE BOY OF THE CAVE"



NEW YORK
E. P. DUTTON & COMPANY
31 WEST TWENTY-THIRD STREET

CAPTAIN PETE OF CORTESANA

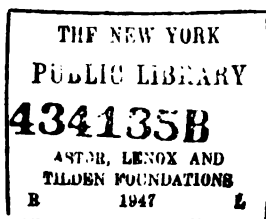
BY
JAMES COOPER WHEELER

AUTHOR OF "CAPTAIN PETE OF PUGET SOUND"



NEW YORK
E. P. DUTTON & COMPANY
31 WEST TWENTY-THIRD STREET

L 19092
mrs



Copyright, 1909
By E. P. DUTTON & COMPANY

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
ONE	1
TWO	13
THREE	25
FOUR	35
FIVE	48
SIX	60
SEVEN	71
EIGHT	78
NINE	89
TEN	101
ELEVEN	111
TWELVE	122
THIRTEEN	133
FOURTEEN	144
FIFTEEN	155
SIXTEEN	166
SEVENTEEN	176
EIGHTEEN	191
NINETEEN	203
TWENTY	214
TWENTY-ONE	226
TWENTY-TWO	238
TWENTY-THREE	251
TWENTY-FOUR	262
TWENTY-FIVE	275
TWENTY-SIX	281
TWENTY-SEVEN	290

Lockley, Dec. 24, 1947

ILLUSTRATIONS

	PAGE
CAPTAIN PETE AND TOM WENT TO WORK WITH GREAT ENERGY	<i>Frontispiece</i> 60
"HERE ARE THE SANDWICHES," SAID TOM	11
DOPE HELD HIM DOWN WITH HIS PAWS AND MOANED THROUGH HIS MUZZLE	98
HE FELT THE BASE OF HIS EAR TOUCHED BY SOMETHING COLD	193
PETE LEAPT FROM HIS SEAT LIKE A WILDCAT	269

Captain Pete of Cortesana

CHAPTER ONE

“WELL,” soliloquised Captain Pete one morning several months after the capture of Bill Kelley, the King of the Smugglers, and Mike McGovern in the Sucia islands as related in the closing chapter of Captain Pete of Puget Sound; “I suppose father and I are safe enough now with Kelley and Mike back in the Penitentiary, and Strobel in Walla Walla State’s prison. And anyway we got two hundred dollars out of it, didn’t we, Dope? That will buy a lot of dog meat, won’t it, old fellow?”

As he pulled the mastiff’s ears and asked the last question, he was hailed by Tom Fisher, who called through the open door:

“Father’s just got in, Pete, and wants you to come over as soon as you can.”

“I’ll go right away!” answered Pete promptly, and five minutes after he was shaking hands with Major Fisher, who handed him a folded copy of the Seattle Post, and remarked:

“Pete, you’ll find an article marked with lead pencil on the fifth page of that paper. Sit down

and read it, and then I want to have a talk with you about your affairs."

On turning to the page designated by the major, Pete's eye was at once caught by a number of black headlines running half way down the column. They read in immense capitals:

THE GREAT CITY OF THE FUTURE.

THE METROPOLIS OF THE PUGET
SOUND BASIN.

TO BE LOCATED ON HIDALGO ISLAND.

ENTREPOT OF THE GREAT MINERAL;
TIMBER; AND AGRICULTURAL RE-
SOURCES OF WASHINGTON.

THE TERMINAL POINT FOR RAILWAY
AND STEAMSHIP TRANSFER ON THE
SHORT AND DIRECT TRANSCONTI-
NENTAL AND TRANSOCEANIC LINE
BETWEEN ALL ATLANTIC AND
PACIFIC OCEAN COUNTRIES

Captain Pete assimilated these glowing headlines with wonder, and then began to read the article, of which we reproduce a portion.

"Hidalgo island is a 'reviving wonder,' and is clearly marked by every commercial requirement

as the terminal and transfer point between railway and steamship travel without expense of towage, pilotage, or delay on this great route of transcontinental, and transoceanic traffic, which the interchange of commodities demands, and commercial sagacity recognizes as the one entirely feasible. Every early utterance has suggested it, every proposed and surveyed route has admitted it, and a study of a map, or a glance at a globe, settle and prove it indisputably.

"From Hidalgo island to continental Asia the distance is over a thousand miles shorter, and to China and Japan three hundred and fifty miles shorter than from San Francisco; Hidalgo island, pointing the route for commerce to all Atlantic ocean countries; The Pacific ocean trade of itself is enough to solve the location of the Puget Sound basin. Upon Hidalgo island the railroad line clearly locates it, and the interchange of commodities demands its establishment. Inspired by the advantages it possesses, the Origgon Improvement company intend to apply the means of development—the Railroad—to render the ideal into the actual. At its suggestion the Unexpected will become a Reality, and in the wilderness of firs now enveloping Hidalgo island will arise, as a necessity, a magnificent city."

"Well," asked Major Fisher, seeing that Pete had dropped the paper, "what do you think of it?"

"It appears to me very much like buncombe," replied Pete, smiling.

"Much of it is, of course, but nevertheless the main facts stated are true enough. The predictions certainly must be taken with some allowance. But the gist of the matter lies in this; that the Origgon Improvement company, which is a powerful and wealthy corporation, has taken up a part of Hidalgo island, and is booming it with the intention of building a city there."

"Do you think they'll really do it?" inquired Pete sceptically.

"Why, yes," responded the major, "I honestly have a great deal of confidence in it. It is a splendid natural location for a city, and placed as that paper hints so broadly, in the right place to build up a trade. Then, when it is cleared and settled up, there will be a very rich country back of it of which it will naturally be the seaport. Oh no, my boy, I don't think you and I have thrown away cash in buying land there."

"Then we might make a good deal of money?" queried Pete, becoming more interested.

"Yes, if we pay attention, and act with good judgment we ought to double our money a number of times. And it was this part of the matter I wanted to talk to you about. I stopped at Seattle on my way home—that is headquarters for the Hidalgo boom, you know—and from the talk I learned it is intended to start the future city right

along. There are rich and experienced men at the head of the movement, and when they begin in earnest there will probably be a big furore down there—a regular western ‘boom’—in which during the excitement and competition caused by the great amount of real estate speculation which will take place, prices will go temporarily higher than the real or conservative valuation. Such, I have noticed, is the case in booms. If anything of this kind takes place you and I ought to be on hand, and take advantage of it in order to sell such portions of our property as we don’t wish to keep for permanent investment. And perhaps we may want to buy with the proceeds of such sales other property that we think more favorably of.”

“So you think we ought to go down there?” anticipated Pete.

“I certainly do, and I don’t know but it may prove desirable for one of us to remain there some time.”

“All right,” assented Pete. “I don’t know any reason why I shouldn’t go.”

“No, on the contrary, I believe it would be a good thing for you, and it would, at any rate, give you some experience in actual business, which will be as valuable a part of your education as the lessons you are learning now. Besides, I am thinking of taking Tom down with me, and if I find it necessary, and am called away on Department business, I shall probably leave him there as the

representative of my interests. He is fairly well posted, and I can trust him."

"That settles it!" exclaimed Pete, "when do we start?"

At this moment Tom himself entered the room, and caught the last sentence: "Start where?" he demanded. "What are you two plotting?"

"Why," said his father with a smile, "I have been persuading Captain Pete to go down with me to Hidalgo island, and I was telling him that I thought of taking you along for ballast if you could tear yourself away from Port Townsend."

"Port Townsend!" ejaculated Tom in great scorn, "who cares about Port Townsend! But what are you going down to Hidalgo for? To hunt and fish?"

"No, we both own some property down there, and are going to look after it. Take him away, Pete, and tell him. The embargo is off the subject now, and you may talk all you please. By the way, Pete, come up to-night to dinner, and we'll arrange our plans."

"All right, sir. Come along, Tom."

And the boys went out arm in arm. Tom was greatly surprised when Pete told him of the Hidalgo investment he had made at his father's suggestion and equally excited when he heard of the prospect of a large city being built in the neighborhood of the property.

"By Ginger!" he exclaimed, "Dad's a good fellow to know, ain't he?"

"He's the best friend a boy could have!" answered Pete, his voice trembling with the earnestness of the assertion. "And I'll never get through thanking him. Why, if it hadn't been for him I should have been down on Waldron island selling fish now, without a chance in life!"

"Well, I don't know about that," disagreed Tom, "I've a notion that you'd have got out, and made yourself a chance, one way or another, even if nobody had given you a boost. But Dad is a downright good fellow, for all that."

"We'll never fight over that proposition," agreed Pete.

"But what a pair of clams you are to keep this Hidalgo business to yourselves all this time!"

"I think your mother knew it, Tom."

"Oh yes, you can bet on that! If it was anything in your interest mother was sure to have a hand in it. I'm almost jealous of you, Pete, she thinks so much of you."

"You needn't be, old boy," replied our hero, putting his arm over his friend's shoulder. "It don't come out of your share, and her affection is very precious to me."

"Of course I ain't really, Pete. For my part, the more they like you the better I'm pleased. But what do you suppose we'll do in Hidalgo?"

And the conversation took another turn, and the boys were soon deep in their plans.

"Well boys!" exclaimed Major Fisher, as he came in to dinner that evening. "I've got a great scheme! Do you know what I did to-day?"

"No! what was it?" they both cried with eager anticipation.

"I bought the Susie, that sloop that was taken from Kelley and McGovern."

"No!" said Pete, "she's a hummer! Almost as fast and weatherly as the Tyee, and more cabin room."

"Yes, she was auctioned off to-day by the custom's authorities, and I bought her for twenty-eight dollars."

"Gee whiz! That's cheap!" asserted Pete.

"And what do you suppose I intend to do with her?" queried the major.

"Give it up," said Tom. "Tell us!"

"Go down to Hidalgo in her!" guessed Pete with a bright face.

"Right, my boy. A little vacation will do us all good. And besides there are first-rate sleeping accommodations on her, and we'll take provisions along, and cook and eat on board. How do you like the plan?"

"Hurra!" shouted both the boys.

"Well, I declare it sounds like a picnic," remarked Mrs. Fisher, "Really, I am very much inclined to go with you."

"Oh, can't you?" exclaimed Pete, "we would make it so pleasant for you, and I am sure you would enjoy it."

"At any rate, Lydia," said the major, "if you got tired of the life with us, we could take you to Whatcom and send you home on the steamer, It's a good idea. Come along."

"I am very much inclined to. Captain Pete, will you take good care of me?"

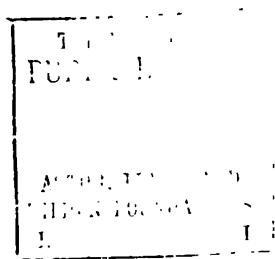
"Won't I!" said Pete, in a tone of affirmation so ludicrously earnest they all laughed.

"Then I will!" she resolved.

As the next day was Sunday it was arranged the expedition should start Monday afternoon. Pete was appointed captain by unanimous consent, as neither Tom nor his father were particularly knowing sailors, and he agreed to look after the Susie, and her rigging and other equipment. The major undertook with Tom's help, to superintend the commissariat department, and lay in a full stock of such provisions as would be needed. There were four good wide berths under the roomy half-deck of the new purchase, and Mrs. Fisher agreed to provide mattresses, and bed clothing. There was also a cook stove that would answer perfectly all their needs, and some cooking utensils, and crockery as well. But Mrs. Fisher objected to the latter. She said whimsically that while "she did not wish to be considered fastidious, she really wished that they would throw the pots and pans

and dishes that Mr. Kelley and his associates had cooked in and eaten out of, overboard, and permit her to provide new ones." All agreed on consideration that she was right.

The major owned a wall tent, large enough to accommodate six or eight persons comfortably. He decided to take this along in case they should want to camp on shore. Fish lines, and hooks, and the major's gun were also among the cargo, and when everything was brought down to the sloop in an express wagon Monday afternoon, Captain Pete had quite a job to stow it all away so that it would not litter the deck, and interfere with the comfort of the passengers. At last, however, everything was arranged to his satisfaction. The major and Mrs. Fisher came aboard—Tom was already on hand—and they set sail. It was a lovely afternoon, and a pleasant breeze heeled the Susie slightly as the wind caught the canvas. Pete took the tiller, and the lady passenger sat near him. Tom and the major acted as deck hands, coiled up the ropes, and made everything snug under the young captain's directions. The swift sloop raced merrily along over the dancing, sunlit ripples, and all were in the best of spirits. Mrs. Fisher who was inclined to be timid at first, watched the captain rather fearfully, but when she saw how perfectly he managed the boat, she gained confidence, and said that "sailing was delightful when you had all your dear ones along." Tom mis-





"HERE ARE THE SANDWICHES," SAID TOM.

chievously asked if that remark included Captain Pete.

"To be sure it does," answered his mother, laying her delicate hand on Pete's which grasped the tiller, "I'm this boy's second mother. Am I not, Pete?"

"God bless you, ma'am," he replied, "I am happy to think so."

And the sun dropped below the horizon leaving the world a rosy, golden color which shortly faded into a salmon stain, and then through various gradations to leaden blue. But before there was time to become dreary, the full moon hitched itself up by a slow, steady pull from the level edge of the waters in the east, and mounted majestically, a great glowing ball, in the midst of the blue bowl of Heaven above. Tom's mother gave a sigh of content, and remarked:

"I never realized before how glorious it is to be on the water on a small boat. This is heavenly!"

"Yes, it's glorious," admitted the major in his matter-of-fact way. "But I'm getting hungry, and I think Tom had better get that lunch out, and pass it around. And Lydia, pull your shawl closer around you. It's getting cold."

She did so, and laughingly remarked to Pete: "That's the way he always throws cold water on me when I am inclined to grow sentimental."

"Here are the sandwiches," said Tom. Every-

body reached for one, and that was the end of sentiment.

About eleven they all retired to their bunks except Pete, who promised to call them if he needed help. It was a clear night, and the breeze was steady. He was glad to be alone in the silence on the water as of old, and it made him thoughtful.

CHAPTER TWO

YES, Pete wanted to think by himself. He had become very much interested in this Hidalgo speculation since his last talk with Major Fisher about it. Pete was born with a vivid imagination that never had fair play during his boyhood on the ranche—when every moment was taken up in the struggle for existence.

The last year of study, and association with cultivated people had freed this quality from its trammels, and although the habit of mental self-control was already formed, on this occasion he longed to let his spirit run free, and revel in all the possibilities suggested by the situation.

“Why,” his heart said, “The major is a shrewd, hardheaded man of the world, and the last one to be mistaken in a business affair like this. He is sure there is to be a city here at Hidalgo, and his land and my land will be right in it. Thirty acres—that’s what I own—inside a city means a good deal of money, even if it isn’t on the best business street. Let me see. Why, I suppose thirty acres of land in the residence portion of Port Townsend, or even on the outskirts, would be worth three or four hundred thousand dollars, and in Victoria it would tot up double that, because of the larger

population. Gee whiz! eight hundred thousand dollars! Why that must be a heap more than collector Hogan is worth. Even half of that, or a quarter, would be more than I need.

I suppose the four or the eight hundred thousand can wait until the city grows up. No! I won't be greedy! I'll get enough out of it to put me through Stanford, and let the rest lie, and increase in value. I wonder what Grace Hogan would say if I were worth eight hundred thousand dollars! Pshaw! I don't believe she would care. She's probably forgotten Captain Pete ever lived, since she has been in New York. No! I don't believe that either. She wasn't the kind of girl to forget her friends, but there, that's all nonsense, for I'm not a friend, but only a poor boy that she and her father were kind to. I don't care. But I have risen higher, and I'm going to get further up on the ladder of life yet until even Grace need not be ashamed of me. And what then, Captain Pete? I'm sure I don't know. The rest of it can take care of itself. After all, then, what I've got to do is to pitch in as hard as I can down here at Hidalgo, and dig up enough money to make the next step forward, which is Stanford college."

This was as far as Pete's thoughts went coherently, but it must be acknowledged that his imagination did not stop here, although he no longer dared to put his glowing fancies in words, and face them squarely as was his wont. The reader must

remember that Pete is sixteen now, and a very forward, mannish lad for his age. His fancy had been captured by Grace Hogan's charming and novel personality. His was a wonderfully steadfast mind, and her image stuck in his remembrance as he had last seen her, inclining her sweet head with shining eyes as he bade her good-bye. It was a year ago, and he had not had a word or a message from her since, but somehow he felt that children as they had been at the time, there was a bond between them that neither would be willing to break without feeling that a wrong had been done to the other. This then, was the star that drew him onward, and made him dissatisfied with any of the less worthy places in Life. This was why he so earnestly sought education, and why the glamour of wealth was so attractive to him. In spite of these dazzling dreams he scarcely admitted to himself—that he was in love. Pete was sternly determined to be practical. Hard work and perseverance were the genii that were to effect his transformation, and he realized that no easy process of "rubbing a lamp" like Aladdin's ever produced such results as he desired.

And so he sat on and thought until the moon passed away. Then the stars grew whiter and finally faded out, and a pale mist spread over the face of the waters. He felt that the world was eerie and unreal. Now the white, fleecy clouds in the East became stained with rose color which grew and

deepened moment by moment, until suddenly and almost with a bound, the sun came into view, the chill air grew warm, and it was day on Puget Sound.

"Larboard watch, ahoy!" cried Tom Fisher as he came out to his father and mother. "Tumble out here, you land lubbers! The captain wants his breakfast, and the voyage is almost ended."

While his parents were dressing Tom tried to draw a bucket of salt water from over the side but he nearly fell overboard in his first attempt, and Pete had to show him how to take it out with a quick dip towards the stern, instead of working against the course and speed of the sloop as Tom had tried to do in the first endeavor.

"Now," said Pete, "go forward, and wash yourself, and don't say anything more about land lubbers."

"Why, you confounded old shellback," returned Tom, who was in uproarious spirits, "do you think you're at sea now where you can bully your crew as you please?"

At this moment his father emerged from under the half-deck, and crying:

"What's this? Mutiny on the *Susie*?" he grabbed Tom by the neck, and inquired: "Shall I throw the mutineer overboard, captain?"

"No, don't!" interposed Mrs. Fisher, who had followed her husband. "Not until after he gets breakfast, anyway."

"I pardon him for his mother's sake," announced Captain Pete magnanimously, "but the next time he shall be ironed and put in the run."

"You may put me on the run, but not in it," punned Tom, with a grin as he went to wash.

"Pete, old fellow," remarked the major, "every honor bears its penalty. Because you're captain, you had to sit up all night, while we deck hands, with no responsibility, slept through it. Where are we, anyhow?"

"That's Hidalgo island," indicating with a gesture a densely wooded island. "And here is Burro Bay. In an hour, with this breeze, we'll be in Guemes channel. That's where you want to go, you said."

"Yes, I hear they've named that indentation Ship harbor, and the Origgon Improvement company will build wharves there the first work they undertake. Our land lies about half a mile from there on Hidalgo bay. We'll hunt up Mr. Munks, the former owner, and go over it to-day."

And now they had breakfast. Tom fried some ham and eggs and opened a can of meat, while Mrs. Fisher contributed her share by baking two pans of biscuit and brewing the coffee. The briny air gave them all a good appetite and there was very little left for Dope, who of course was one of the party, although mention of the fact has been somehow overlooked. By the time they had finished the meal the *Susie* had brought them to Ship harbor and

Tom, who was forward, suddenly gave a hoarse, sailorlike cry at which they all laughed, of

"Sail ho!!!"

"Where away?" called out Captain Pete as soon as the merriment had subsided.

"Right ahead, sir," was the answer. Pete could not see it from his position at the tiller, but the major took his field glasses, and went forward."

"By George! It's a yacht!" exclaimed he. "I wouldn't be at all surprised if it turned out to be some of the Origgon people up here reconnoitring, and laying out their plans. If so, we're in luck, as we'll probably get an inkling of their intentions which will be of value to us. Knowledge of this kind is profitable if it is not power. Now, we'll just say we're out on a sailing and camping spree, and not mention the fact that we have any interest in Hidalgo."

Pete's eyes flashed, and his heart gave a leap.

"All right, sir," said he. "We'll open the Hidalgo campaign now."

The major looked at the boy's steadfast eyes, his square jaws, and turned aside to say to his wife:

"Lydia, look at that lad! Did you ever see a more promising young fellow in your life? And remember what he was a year ago when Tom brought him to us."

"Yes," replied Mrs. Fisher, with a satisfied smile, "he's got his foot on the ladder now, and if I'm any

judge of boys he'll never stop mounting until he reaches the top rung."

"I've a good deal of confidence in your judgment, Lyd, and in this case I'm sure you're right." Then he raised his voice: "I think we'd better drop anchor somewhere near that yacht, Captain Pete."

"Very well, sir, I'll bear up there. Tom get that line clear, will you? and make it fast to the kedg anchor in front of the bitts."

"Aye, aye, sir!" answered Tom in his exaggerated sailor voice whereupon all laughed again, even the captain.

As they came nearer they saw that the craft was a handsome, well-appointed steam yacht, of ninety or one hundred tons burden. Half a dozen persons were on deck, among them a couple of ladies, and a fine, varnished cedar row boat was trailing alongside. Altogether it was the most thoroughly-appointed yacht Pete had ever seen. As the *Susie* swept past her bow a man came to the gangway, and called out:

"Sloop ahoy! Who are you, and where are you bound?"

Major Fisher sprang up, and took hold of the stay forward:

"This is the sloop *Susie*," he replied in true nautical style, "Captain Pete Graignic; out of Port Townsend yesterday, and bound for fun. Who are you?"

There was a general laugh on board the yacht, and then another gentleman came to the side, and hailed:

"Isn't that Major Fisher, of the customs department?"

"Yes," answered the major, rather surprised.

"I thought so," said the other. "My name is McNorton. I met you in Seattle some time ago. This is the yacht *Ariel*, from the Queen City. Won't you come aboard, major? and I see a gown there. Is it Mrs. Fisher? Bring her along."

"Thanks!" answered the major, as he went aft.

"Come to an anchor. There's good bottom where you are at five or six fathom. We'll send a boat for your party, and we'd like to see Captain Pete, too." The man who had spoken first said this.

"There!" said Tom Fisher, "Captain Pete's fame has gone before him. I'll bet those swells know all about your smuggler-catching exploits, Pete, and they're going to give you an ovation."

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Pete, looking uneasy.

By the time the anchor was down, and the sails stowed, the boat was alongside. Mr. McNorton met them at the rail, and making them welcome led them aft to where a party of ladies and gentlemen were standing. "Let me introduce you," he said, "to Mrs. Walcott, and Mrs. Thompson, and Miss McIntyre. And this is Mr. McIntyre of Seattle, to whom the *Ariel* belongs, and Mr. Walcott, and Doctor Burns. Major, and Mrs. Fisher, and their son

Tom, and Captain Pete Graignic, isn't it?" he added questioningly.

Tom grinned and Pete blushed. But the yacht party were very cordial, and even Pete was soon at his ease, although it was evident as Tom had predicted, that they had heard of his exploits, and were especially interested in him. Mr. McNorton explained to Major Fisher that the trip of the *Ariel* was partly on pleasure and partly on business.

"Mr. McIntyre, you know, is connected with the Origgon Improvement company," he said. "And the rest of us are all interested in some wild lands we own here on Hidalgo island. There is some contemplated improvement here, and we made up a party to come and see it ourselves. There are two more of us ashore whom you will meet later on at luncheon."

The major was much too shrewd and well-bred to ask any further particulars, though he looked significantly at Pete as he caught his eye.

Miss McIntyre, who was just from the East on a visit to her brother, was a handsome, black-eyed young lady of about nineteen years of age. She was very much interested in Puget Sound, it being her first visit here. It happened directly, probably through some manœuvring of her own, that she found herself next to Tom and Pete.

"Oh, Mr. Fisher," she said, "isn't this Puget Sound country perfectly delicious! So picturesque, and romantic, you know."

"Yes," replied Tom, "I quite agree with you, especially about the romance."

"Do tell me," she said, looking at Pete whose cheek began to glow for he suspected what his teasing friend was leading up to, "some of those delightful tales about the smugglers they say inhabit all these lovely islands, and ply their illegal traffic between here and British Columbia."

"Why," returned Tom, looking wicked, "this island behind you, Guemes, it is called, was for some years the home of the most desperate of them all. He was named Bill Kelley, and is called the 'King of the Smugglers.'"

Captain Pete gave a little snort of indignation and started away, but Miss McIntyre said imploringly:

"Oh! don't go, Captain Pete. Stay and hear this delightful story that I am sure Mr. Fisher is going to tell us."

"Yes, he ought to," added Tom, "for he is the hero of it."

"Nonsense, Miss McIntyre! Tom had just as much to do with Bill Kelley's capture as I did, and he's trying to manufacture glory out of it now. If you take my advice, you'll not believe half he tells you. He's a great hand at the long bow."

"Oh!" she answered, "I'm a tenderfoot, you know, and my appetite for your western marvels is never sated. Now tell me? did you two boys—I beg your pardon, young men, I should have

said—really capture the ‘King of the Smugglers?’ ”

Mr. McNorton had overheard these last remarks, and he now spoke:

“There’s a good story going to be told here, and I advise you all to come and hear it.”

The ladies came quickly, followed by the gentlemen, and Mrs. Thompson asked:

“What is it about?”

“It’s the Tale of the ‘King of the Smugglers,’ ” answered he.

Tom Fisher now found that had a larger contract on his shoulders than he had intended to take. It was one thing to tell the story only to Miss McIntyre and quite another to relate it to all the company, so very much to Captain Pete’s gratitude and amusement he funkcd it by saying:

“The truth of the matter is that it was really father who did the capturing and he ought to tell the story.”

“Yes, do, major!” said they all.

And so the major finally did, but in a very different way than Tom had intended to. He had noticed that the latter was teasing Pete, so he laid great stress on Tom’s being unable to get across the island at Dog-fish Pass, and how he finally had to go back to the dingey, and come up after the battle was over, in the Black Pup, while Pete worked his way through, and was one of the factors in the actual capture.

Miss McIntyre had been the most deeply inter-

ested of the auditors, and when the major concluded she surprised them all by saying:

"Do you know, I have heard this story before. It was told to me just as you have related it, in New York nearly a year ago, and that was why I was struck by Captain Pete's name when Major Fisher called it out to us."

There were numerous ejaculations of wonder, and Mrs. Fisher asked: "Why, who could have told it to you, Miss McIntyre?"

Then Captain Pete heard something that made his heart beat very rapidly, although he succeeded in looking comparatively disinterested.

"Why," explained Miss McIntyre, "I was one of the boarding pupils at Miss Thornton's Finishing school on Fifth avenue, and a new pupil who came all the way from Port Townsend was put in my room. Her name was Grace Hogan, and she was a charming girl. She told me the story first, and if you had heard her relate it, you would have thought Captain Pete a veritable hero of Romance. Many a time have we discussed you, young man," she added, shaking her head at Pete, "long after we should have been asleep."

CHAPTER THREE

IN about an hour the two gentlemen who had been absent on shore, returned, and were presented to our friends. They were a Mr. Garret, and a Mr. Hobart, and the former was an eastern capitalist who was, or intended to become connected with the Hidalgo 'deal.' There was no actual business talk, but in the course of the general conversation a number of remarks were made that, while they would have conveyed no meaning to the uninstructed listener, were full of significance to Major Fisher, who had thoroughly studied up the Hidalgo matter, and was aware of all the possibilities in connection with the site of the future city.

When they returned to the *Susie* after many cordial admonitions to be neighborly as long as they remained in the vicinity, they felt that there was considerable contrast between their quarters on the sloop, and the appointments of the sumptuous *Ariel*. The major, however, was well content with the way they had passed the morning, and stated that he was satisfied the gentlemen of the *Ariel* party were engaged in deciding the locations of the more important parts of the coming city, such as the railroad termini, and water approaches—in other words the wharves. He said that he had heard of Mr. Gar-

ret before in relation to Hidalgo, and knew that several large tracts of land on it were recorded in his name.

"In fact," said the major, "if we could find out from them the spot where the docks are to be located, it would be lots of money in our pockets, for the railroad will be somewhere near, of course, and those two will cause the business portion of the city to grow up in their vicinity. If we know where the business centre is to be, it will be easy to figure out the best and most valuable residence property, and we'll have the whole situation mapped out."

Mrs. Fisher, who had been uneasy while her husband was talking, now took up the conversation:

"Tom," said she, "do you know I don't exactly like your business methods? I really think it is mean, and disreputable to spy upon your friends, and try to make money out of information you get out of them without their knowledge."

"Why, Lydia!" exclaimed the major, looking much disturbed, "what an accusation! I believe you are unjust to me, or else you don't understand the matter clearly. I am not taking, and do not desire to take any unfair advantage of those gentlemen. They intend building a city somewhere hereabouts, and what harm can it possibly do them if I can find out some of the details which must sooner or later be made public, and make money out of the knowledge without detriment to their interests? That is called shrewdness in the business world.

Besides I have not lied, or misrepresented things to them in any way. I don't see how I am disreputable," he concluded in a rather injured tone.

Tom and Pete had listened to these remarks with wide open eyes, and the most vivid interest. Mrs. Fisher resumed:

"I suppose you are right, dear. I was hasty, and spoke more thoughtlessly than usual. I don't mean to criticize you, and certainly not to call you dishonest, but I must confess that I feel that it was not perfectly frank of us to pretend that we did not know anything of their intention to build a city on Hidalgo island."

"Why, mother," said Tom, "they didn't tell us their plans. Why should we tell them ours?"

"But," interposed Pete, "it doesn't seem to me that's the same thing! We are trying to trade on their plans."

Mrs. Fisher, who was sitting near him, laid her hand approvingly on Pete's shoulder, but did not speak. Then the major resumed the discussion:

"Yes, Tom," he said musingly, "Pete has put his finger on the weak spot in our case. And I admit there is some justice in mother's view, from her standpoint, but nevertheless, I do not think she is altogether right. Business, especially in this country, is a sort of warfare, and every advantage that we gain honorably may be used. That's just what the *Ariel* party is trying to do. They are the main projectors and promoters of this new

city, and they are trying to keep matters secret until they have succeeded in getting control of the most eligible sites—the most paying property, and avenues of trade. If Pete and I own real estate here I can see no reason why we should not fight to make our interests profitable also.”

“Yes,” said Pete, “but honorable warfare.”

“There, Lydia,” continued the major, “you’ve made one convert, at any rate. And, although I am certain that your sense of honor is too nice to prevail in everyday business affairs, I am sure it would be much more satisfactory if all men of large interests were guided by your principles.”

Shortly after the close of this discussion on Business Ethics Major Fisher got up a map of Hidalgo, and spread it on the table in the cabin.

“Now, Pete,” said he, “I want you to look over this chart with me. You see, about here is where the *Susie* is lying. What they have christened Ship Harbor, lies back of Shannon Point, between us, and this point ahead, which has no name that I know of. All along this stretch of shore I have found, by reference to the Naval Surveys, there is plenty of water at low tide, right up to the beach. Besides that, as far as I have seen, the land back of the shore front is level.”

“Yes, sir,” interrupted Pete, “dad and I have been over it, and I know pretty well how it lies. It is almost level for two miles and a half back, and then it comes to some steep hills. And the

timber, mostly fir, is about the heaviest I ever saw off the mainland."

"So, you see," continued the major, "that wouldn't be a bad place for the city. At least, there are two of the requisites, a good water front, and level ground to build on. Now let's see about this railway that the Origgon Improvement company intends to run in here."

"Major!" exploded Pete, "look here! If that railroad is coming into Hidalgo island, it can't cross Imposture Pass without a higher suspension bridge than the one between New York and Brooklyn, because the water there is so swift and deep. And Smilk bay is too wide. Don't you see then, that they must cross the Slough at the head of Padilla Bay, and then come over here by the end of Hidalgo Bay?"

"Pete, I declare I think you're right! And when they reach the foot of the bay, they can run the track on the level to the water front here at Ship Harbor. That will be it, as sure as you live!" and the major thumped the table in his enthusiasm.

"Now," he resumed, bending over the map again, "you see this point ahead of us is really more of a peninsula than it is a promontory. The Sound runs in on the other side, and forms a little bay making the neck of the peninsula quite narrow. It is down there that our property lies. You've got about 700 feet of water front, and I have nearly double that."

"Well," said Pete, "I don't see what we can do before they begin operations."

"No, we can't do anything at present, to be sure. But wait! The first blow of the pick that is struck on the construction of that railway to connect Hidalgo island with the outside world, will bring a thousand men here, eager to invest. When the advantages of the location are advertised, and the work actually begun you will see the liveliest boom here that has ever been on the Sound. And Pete, we'll be in it! No! there's nothing to do now; but wait! and you'll see a transformation scene. These trees will seem to change into houses by magic, and where the deer and bear run now, will be telegraph poles and iron rails."

"Come to supper," said Mrs. Fisher, "and don't work Pete up to a more dangerous pitch of enthusiasm than he has arrived at already."

"I'll do it," answered her husband, folding up the map, "under protest."

The next day the *Ariel* weighed anchor, and steamed away, with much blowing of whistles, and waving of handkerchiefs in the way of farewell to the party on the *Susie*. Captain Pete had rather counted on another interview with Miss McIntyre, in which he had intended to ask her a good many questions about Grace Hogan, which the suddenness and publicity of his last opportunity had not permitted him to do.

They now moved the *Susie* around to the other

side of the neck of the peninsula, and lay at anchor where, as Major Fisher said, "they could gaze on their own property." They also made a number of excursions ashore, and shot some grouse, "hooters," as Pete called them at that season, on account of their sitting on the trees, and injudiciously attracting attention to their whereabouts by their unearthly hooting. These proved a palatable addition to their bill of fare. Captain Pete also found a likely place for rock cod in Guemes channel, and they caught a number of them, and found them delicious eating. So they occupied themselves in fishing and hunting, and generally having a good time for several days, when one afternoon they heard the loud whistle of a steamer. The sound seemed to come across the neck of land from Ship Harbor, and the major proposed that they should get their anchor up, and sail around to see what was going on. There was a fresh breeze, and fifteen minutes sail brought them around the point. About a mile up the shore were two large stern wheel steamers. They both seemed to be anchored a short distance from the beach. Between them and apparently moored to the shore, was a large scow or raft, on which some sort of tall, light house-looking structure was reared.

"Hurra!" shouted Pete, "it's a pile-driver! And then look on shore! If there ain't six-seven, eight tents. Major, they're going to drive the piles for the first wharf in our new city!"

The rest were infected by Pete's excitement, and they broke into exclamations of enthusiastic delight.

"I do believe you're right, my boy," cried the major, as he surveyed the scene through his field-glasses. "That is certainly a pile-driver, and they seem to have a boiler on the raft, too. There is a small army of men on shore. It must be the clearing gang."

"Yes," added Pete, "and that further steamer has got a tow behind it. Those must be the piles they brought with them ready to drive. Jiminy, major! we are in it, ain't we? If they build the wharf there, it will be within a mile of our land. Why, we'll be right in the city!"

"Keep your shirt on, Pete," advised Tom Fisher, "don't go counting your chickens before they're hatched."

"Oh, well," said Pete, pulling himself in a bit in response to this sage advice from his friend, "perhaps I *am* going a little fast, but what on earth else would all these men be here for, if not to start work on the new city?"

"Don't you let him worry you, Pete, it's all right. That's why they're here, and we're going right up to find out all we can about it. There can't be any more secrecy now."

Pete hauled in the sheet a little, and belayed it. Shortly the boy captain, whose hand had lost none of its cunning in the art of small boat sailing since

he had been skipper of the *Tyee*, brought her cleverly alongside of the great raft, and spilled the wind from her sail. Major Fisher leaped out, and walked to where a gentleman was directing some laborers who were at work about the pile driver.

"How do you do, sir? I am Major Fisher, of Port Townsend," he began.

"Glad to meet you, major," said the man, in a very courteous way, and shaking hands with him. "My name is Sam Henry."

"Happy to make your acquaintance, Mr. Henry. May I ask what is going on here?"

"Why, certainly," said Henry, "there's no secret about the matter that I know of. I have got a contract from the Origgon Improvement company to put a large amount of piling in here, and construct a wharf. It looks like a pretty big undertaking, too, don't it? There is another gang ashore there, under the superintendence of Mr. Doane, who are going to clear a hundred acres at once. I understand the Grand Pacific railway is going to have a connection in here, and build up a town. You are the first man, outside of us, on the new town site. You won't know the place in a week, for we are instructed to put in as many men as we can work, and rush the job right through. And let me tell you something,—" added Henry, moving closer to the major, and speaking in a lower tone, "unless I am greatly mistaken, every foot of land within three miles of here will be worth ten times what it is now

inside of two weeks. In short, as soon as this thing gets out."

"Thank you," said the major, "am I indiscreet in asking you if you know where the railway will cross to Hidalgo island?"

Henry, who was a stout, good-natured looking man, laughed, and answered:

"I perceive you are no tenderfoot. No, I don't know certainly, but I have heard over the Siwash slough, and in by the foot of Hidalgo bay. There will soon be more steamers from Seattle bringing laborers and supplies. This is going to be one of the biggest camps on the Sound."

"Thank you very much again," concluded the major, "I think I will take a look ashore."

"All right, good-bye," returned Henry, "if I can be of service to you in any way, call on me."

"Won't you come and see us on board the *Susie* this evening?" asked the major, who was much taken with the bluff cordiality of the contractor.

"Yes, I guess I can get off for half an hour, and I'll be glad to," returned he.

"Let's go ashore and look around, Pete," said the major as he came aboard again.

Pete pushed the bow off, so that the sail caught the wind, and going behind the stern of the first boat, he swept into the shore, and ran the *Susie's* nose into the sand in front of the tents. They all disembarked this time, and Pete threw out the kedge anchor, as the tide was rising.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE tents were comfortable, and calculated to accommodate a considerable number of men. One, which was circular in shape, and more extensive than the others, was evidently intended as the dining room. Preparations were busily going on to get it ready for service, as tables, and benches were in the process of manufacture by a number of carpenters. Behind it was the cook's quarters. A great range was already placed in position, and a fire in it, while the cook in his white cap and apron moved busily about, apparently as much in his element as if he had been in a hotel kitchen. A side of beef hung from the bough of a tree near at hand, bags of flour, tubs of butter, tinned vegetables, and other stores were displayed in profusion.

Another large tent was fitted up for the general sleeping quarters, while most of the rest of the houses in this canvas village were the private residences of those in authority. One of these with a flag floating from a pole in front was probably, as the major observed, the dwelling of the commander-in-chief. As the flaps were open they could see that it was handsomely fitted up inside with a table, couch, a mirror, easy chair, and iron bedstead. Altogether it looked so comfortable, and cosy in con-

trast to the wilderness in which it stood, that it made the inmates of the *Susie* inclined to be discontented with their quarters on board the sloop. While they were envying, Mr. Doane, the superintendent of whom Henry had spoken, came along. Perceiving that they were strangers, he stopped, and asked if they had wanted to see him, and the major introduced himself and his party. Mr. Doane was pleasant, and cordial, and told them to make themselves at home in his tent, pointing to the one before them with the flag-pole, and sybaritic appointments, and Mrs. Fisher observed:

"Yes, we were just admiring it. I had no idea, Mr. Doane, that you gentlemen could be so neat and orderly as that looks, when you are away from your women-kind who generally supervise such matters."

"I always insist on particular attention to these details," he answered smilingly, "when I am out on such work as this. It doesn't, by any means however, compensate for the absence of femininity. But won't you all come in?"

"No, we thank you," replied the major, "but we have our sloop here, and probably shall remain some days. Another time. Come and see us aboard the *Susie*."

"Thanks, I will, perhaps to-night," returned the superintendent, who was evidently an admirer of the sex. "One must not neglect the ladies when they do find them in a place of this kind."

They returned to the *Susie* and anchored where they could view everything. The prospect filled them all with hope for the favorable out-turn of the real estate investment, and Pete himself in particular, could hardly refrain from giving utterance to the visionary fancies that filled his brain.

Mr. Henry and Mr. Doane paid them a visit that evening. They talked freely, and predicted there would be a great number of adventurers, real estate speculators, and boomers arrive on the ground before the week was over.

"I wonder what they will call the new city?" speculated Tom.

"Why," said Mr. Doane, "it is already christened. The name is Cortesana. I heard it just before starting."

"Gentlemen," said the major, "there is a case of bottled beer on the *Susie*. Tom, bring some, and glasses, and we will drink the future of Cortesana."

The glasses were filled, and the toast solemnly drank. Then Henry observed:

"I wish we had a hundred acres apiece on Hidalgo island. It's going to be a place sometime."

"I think," said Mr. Doane, "that most of the land about the town site is bought up by people connected with the Origgon Improvement company, and the McNorton Land company. There will be a printed map of the town site out next week, and they will begin to sell property to intending settlers. They

are working night and day on the extension, and in three weeks steel tracks will connect this place with the outside world."

"A saw mill would be a good investment here," remarked Major Fisher.

"The machinery for a large one will be here tomorrow," said Mr. Doane. "Two Irishmen, brothers, are going to start. They bought ten acres a mile and a half from where my tent stands, on Hidalgo bay a week ago. They will probably make a fortune."

"Yes," said Henry, "it's going to be a great camp. I suppose you will get regularly at work tomorrow?"

"Yes, I have got the line of the main street running up from the dock marked out for five hundred yards. We shall get at that first, for it will probably be needed for business in a short time."

"You must have a copy of the map of the town site?" said the major interrogatively.

"Yes, or rather, I have the original plat," answered Mr. Doane. "I must have it to guide me."

"So I should suppose," responded the major, enviously.

"If you'd like to look at it, I'll go and get it," said Mr. Doane, "altho' of course, it would not do to show it to everybody."

"See here, Mr. Doane!" burst out the major, to the surprise of all, "I don't want to masquerade with you. The truth is, I own sixty acres of land

on the island here, and Pete owns thirty, and we came down here because I heard improvements were going to take place. Now, if you want to show me that plat, I'll be remarkably glad, but I didn't want you to do so under false pretenses."

"Why, of course I do, all the more!" exclaimed Doane, "though I must say, you are more frank than I should be under the circumstances."

"There, Lydia! What did I tell you?" cried the major triumphantly to his wife.

Mrs. Fisher laughed outright, and Doane, and Henry looked inquisitive:

"You'd better tell the whole story, Tom," she said, observing their curiosity. "Then they can judge for themselves of the merits of the controversy."

It must be confessed that the major looked a little sheepish as he related the particulars of their visit to the *Ariel*, and the discussion they had had afterwards as to the ethics of his conduct. The two visitors laughed heartily, and unrestrainedly.

"That should teach you, major," said Sam Henry, "never to bring a lady along with you on a business trip."

Mr. Doane turned courteously to Mrs. Fisher:

"I am, of course, on your side, madam," remarked he, "but I must say that such delicacy of honor as you exact, would be sadly in the way in business transactions out here. However, it is extremely probable that if your husband had been as unre-

served with the *Ariel* party, as he has been with us, his frankness would not have been so cordially met. Sam, and myself, however, are not swells, nor the principals of the Cortesana scheme, and no harm can come of our knowing how the land lies. In fact, we may be of some service. However, I'll go and bring the plat."

He stepped into the skiff, and Pete sculled him ashore. When he returned with a roll of paper in his hand, he said to Pete, as he took his seat:

"How did you come to own land here, my lad?"

"Oh, it's a long story," answered Pete. "Major Fisher advised me to make the purchase over a year ago, and I did so with some money I had luckily just earned."

"How was that?" asked Mr. Doane, scenting a story, and much interested.

Pete told him briefly about the capture of the smugglers, and the finding of the opium in Dogfish pass, and as the narration was finished they came alongside the *Susie* again.

"Why, Sam," Mr. Doane exclaimed as he stepped on board, "do you know who these two boys are?"

"No," responded Sam, with a comical look of surprise at the question. "Who are they? Dukes in disguise?"

"Not exactly, but they are the two lads who were instrumental in the capture of Bill Kelley the smuggler, last year."

"There!" burst out Tom, with pretended disgust, "I knew that old story would crop up again before long."

"It need not bother you, Tom," maliciously remarked his father. "Pete was the hero of it."

"Yes, he always gets the credit, at any rate," replied Tom, in the tone of a much injured individual.

Captain Pete put his hand on his friend's shoulder, and said:

"Nonsense, Tom! If it hadn't been for you, I would have never thought of going back to Friday harbor, and telling your father we had seen the *Nonesuch*."

"Pshaw, Pete!" observed the major, "don't mind him. He's only poking fun at you."

Pete looked relieved, and they all drew up to see the plat, which Mr. Doane spread out on the table.

"Now where's your land?" said he.

"Here it is," answered Pete, whose eyes were the quickest, "but it is not marked as the rest is."

They looked where Pete put his finger, and there sure enough were two parcels of land, one of sixty, and one of thirty acres, with their names on them."

"Why," said Mr. Doane, "you're right across the neck, not three quarters of a mile from Ocean dock, and the land lies level as a barn floor! Gentlemen, I congratulate you. If this town goes—"

"And it's certain to!" interpolated Sam Henry, shaking Pete's hand.

"You've both got an independent fortune," concluded the first.

"Let's have another bottle of beer," cried the major. "The prospect of riches is too much for me!"

They all laughed and Tom got the beer, remarking that he hoped wealth would not drive his father to drink. Then they fell to discussing the situation. Among other things, it came out that Mr. Doane and Mr. Henry both intended buying about a thousand dollars' worth of property in the new city as a speculation.

"Captain Pete," said Sam Henry at length, "what will you sell me an acre for, including a slice of water front?"

Pete looked at the contractor to see if he was in earnest, and concluding that he was, he hesitated:

"Where do you want it?" he finally asked.

"Oh, I'm not particular as long as it has a bit of water front. Come, I will give you seven hundred and fifty dollars, and let you pick it out!"

This offer almost took Pete's breath away. Here was Fortune, with a vengeance. That would leave him four hundred and fifty dollars cash, and twenty-nine acres profit on his investment. He didn't know what to say, so he looked at the major for help. He said in response:

"Well, Pete, I don't know exactly how to advise you. You must use your own judgment. If Cortesana grows to be a city of any size, seven hundred

and fifty dollars will be a small price for an acre reasonably well located within its limits. An acre, you know, will cut up into five ordinary, fifty-foot-front city lots. On the other hand, the sale will give you some money in hand, which may be very useful here shortly, and besides, it will make you even on your investment. Choose for yourself."

Now Pete had walked over every foot of his thirty acres since they had been here, and knew it by heart. He could not see why any part of it should be better than another, so he gave a gulp, and plunged into his first real estate deal:

"Well, Mr. Henry," said he flushing, "I'll tell you what I will do, if you think it fair."

"Let's hear, Captain Pete."

"I'll give you your choice of any acre, including a hundred feet of water front, for a thousand dollars."

"Done! My boy. I can't lose on it, anyhow! And it may prove a good speculation for me. I'll pick it out at noon to-morrow, and in the meantime to show you I am in earnest, here is fifty dollars to bind the bargain." He took a fifty-dollar bill out of his pocket book, and handed it to Pete, adding: "You are all witnesses that this is a bona fide purchase. Captain, you can get your deed ready, for I shall send up to Seattle to-morrow for the balance of the money, and in three days I'll conclude the deal."

"All right, sir," answered Pete, as he took the

money, "it's a bargain, and I'll be ready for you."

"I'll go over with you to-morrow at noon; perhaps I may want to buy too," observed Mr. Doane.

After their visitors were gone there was an interval of silence, and then the major remarked:

"Pete, you made that sale very cleverly. You got two hundred and fifty dollars more for the choice, and there isn't really a particle of choice in that land along the water front."

"That's what I thought, sir," answered Pete meekly, looking rather shamefaced.

Tom Fisher exploded into a guffaw, and poked Pete in the ribs:

"Trust him to see everything there is in sight, father," said he. "Pete is sharp as a gimlet. No fear but what he has cut his eye teeth since he left Waldron."

"Yes," the major resumed with a smile, "I think you'll do. You are a pretty downy country boy."

Mrs. Fisher took Pete's hand in her own in her loving way, and said:

"Don't you mind their joking, my adopted boy. You may be shrewd, and I'm glad you are, but your shrewdness will never lead you into dishonest practices."

"There it goes again, Dad," observed Tom, "there's the Mutual Admiration Society!"

Mrs. Fisher smiled at Tom's sally, but patted Pete's hand as she replied:

"Don't be jealous, you jackanapes. I think it is

time to go to bed. Will anybody have to stay up to watch the boat?"

"No," answered Pete, "Dope will do that. Here, Dope, you take charge of things, will you? We're going to bed. If anything happens, let me know, old dog."

Dope replied by a low whine, and leaped up on the bow, where he could have a clear view all around.

"We're safer than if we had a man on watch," remarked Major Fisher.

"I should smile," responded Pete slangily, as they retired.

The sleepers were awakened shortly before dawn the next morning by a deep bay from the mastiff, and as the men of the party quickly came on deck, they were greeted by a succession of the wildest shrieks that were ever heard from a steam whistle.

"It's the *Mountaineer*!" they exclaimed unitedly, and sure enough, there a short distance off in Ship Channel, they saw that little steamer, whose unearthly siren whistle was known in those days to every inhabitant of the Sound.

"My!" said Pete, "she has a lot of people on board."

It was true. She seemed to be laden down with passengers. "She must have left Seattle last night," calculated the major. "And I expect she has got a booming party on board. We shall see some fun to-day, in that case."

"And here comes another steamer," announced Pete, pointing to a line of smoke on the horizon.

"So it does," said Tom. "Cortesana is a lively place this morning. I guess we'd better get breakfast, so we'll be ready for business."

And he set about making the fire, while the others watched the approaching boats. The second one soon showed up more plainly, and proved to be the *Glide*, a freight boat. By this time Mrs. Fisher had joined them, and they stood gazing until Tom sang out, with a capital imitation of a darkey's voice:

"Breakfus' in de dinin' cyar!"

Then they greeted his invitation with a burst of merriment, and sat down to their ham and eggs.

By the time they had finished, the steamers had landed their passengers, and the major proposed going ashore to discover what news they had brought. Tom, who was really a very considerate fellow, said he would stay on board with his mother, so Pete accompanied the major.

"Good morning," said Mr. Doane, meeting them at the beach. "You are out early. I suppose that confounded *Mountaineer* whistle roused you, as it did me. Well, a lot of fellows came down that are going right into business. Several of them tell me they have bought lots of the Origgon company, and have brought tents down with them to live in while they clear the trees off, and build houses.

Land is worth about fifty dollars a front foot on "P" street, this morning."

"That's the street that runs from the wharf," said Pete. "I wonder who's got it for sale?"

"The McNorton Land company's agent came on the *Mountaineer*."

"Let's walk along up," suggested the major.

CHAPTER FIVE

AS they were walking up from the beach the major remarked to his companion, that they were looking at the birth of a city. In older, and more conservative districts, the building up of a town is a work of Time, and Evolution. A cross roads in a settled region is at first, and perhaps for long years, tenanted only by the sign board. Then, as the section districted by the highways becomes populous, and the large farms—only partially cultivated—are parcelled into half a dozen thoroughly tilled ones, a sturdy blacksmith notes the advantages of the locality, and erects his little shed. The nearest neighbors gather, and gossip about the forge, and watch the stalwart smith shape the glowing metal. Next some farmer's lad, born with a spark of the divine instinct that impels Man to rise, starts a little store, at first a two-penny affair, but growing with time, and developing with the locality, until that ambitious lad becomes the Merchant of the Countryside. He lives no longer in the little room back of the store, but marries, and builds him a residence hard by. Then the town is started, and a cobbler sets up his bench, and mends the stogies of the yokels. After a time comes the tavern—sure of patronage, at least for

the wing on its side—and soon after, the school-master who has studied law, hangs out his shingle, and the Cross Roads becomes a Village. After long years a railroad comes, attracted by the increasing productiveness of the rural district, and lo! the drowsy village has become a bustling Town.

Not so in the vast areas of the energetic West, peopled by a restless population possessing the very Fever of Enterprise! Ever ready to pull up their tent stakes, and rush hot-footed to any place promising—how often falsely—advantages their present location does not possess. Born with hardy and adventurous spirits as a birthright, they press forward, and build up cities in a night. The forests fall before their impetuosity, and the sea itself rolls back to give them room.

So it was at Cortesana. Man with ruthless hand, was invading the primeval forest, and subjecting it to his will. That which had endured, with the majesty of strength, for hundreds of years, would be cast down before nightfall. The laborers were already at work, and the ringing of the axe, and the busy grating of the cross-cut saw—each hard at work at the giant firs towering two hundred feet in air—drowned the sound of human voices. At intervals, a thundering crash shook the earth, as some Monarch of the forest fell from his high estate. Scarcely was the fallen king prostrate, before the remorseless teeth of the saw were busy at his vitals, and he was divided into lengths,

and dragged away piecemeal by patient, straining oxen, to make room for Humanity.

Captain Pete had never before seen a busy multitude concentrating their efforts on one object, and the spectacle fascinated him and his practical faculty was aroused. It made him alive to the fact that "P" street, which was so rapidly being hewn out of the living forest, would in a few days, be a desirable headquarters for any one who desired to do buying and selling in Cortesana property. He saw too, that he might make money without disposing of his own land. There would, without doubt, be large amounts of realty on the market, for of course, the new citizens must own homes and places of business.

"Major," said he, "if Tom and I stay down here to look after our interests, why shouldn't we go into business, and make some money out of other people's property while we are watching, and handling our own?"

"Do a commission, or brokerage business, do you mean, Pete?"

"Yes, I suppose that is what I mean, altho' my ideas are not very clearly defined. It appears to me that there will be so much traffic, or dealing done here shortly, that one ought to be able to get hold of some of it, of whatever kind it might be."

"I see, Pete. You are rising to the situation."

"Yes, sir. I begin to realize what all this means, and it sets me on fire to have a hand in it. I won-

der what a lot on "P" street, near the wharf, is worth to-day?"

"I think very possibly as much as a thousand dollars," returned the major.

"And how much would it be worth in a month?" pursued Pete.

"The Lord knows! Perhaps two thousand, perhaps three thousand, and in six months the owner might not be able to sell it for five hundred. I've seen such things in boom towns."

Pete did not answer for an interval, and the major could see from the burning cheek, and sparkling eye of the boy, that his brain was working at high pressure. For the first time Pete was face to face with the practical affairs of existence working on a grand scale. A veil seemed suddenly withdrawn from his intellect, and it fairly throbbed with the sudden comprehension of how fortunes were made. He had never before considered business except from afar. He had gazed at its workings unthinkingly but now he was suddenly awakened, and he became conscious in his own soul, of powers that fitted him for this part in life. At last he spoke again:

"Major, you didn't answer my question. Don't you think Tom and I might be successful, to a degree, if we started a commission, or brokerage business here?"

"I have been thinking about it. I don't want to discourage the idea. I do not really see why it

shouldn't do. Your success would depend entirely on your activity. Judgment would not be essential, for you would be selling other people's property. By the bye, I should not advise you to sell any more of your own at present."

"I didn't intend to, sir. But I am glad that you approve of my idea. Then we ought to have an office, shouldn't we?"

"Yes, the man who carries his office in his hat invariably has a poor one. But, Pete, what is your notion?"

"I was thinking, sir," said the boy, rather awed at the largeness of his project, "of buying a lot on 'P' street."

The major laughed at the doubtful face of his young friend, and after a moment's consideration, responded:

"Well, do as you please. It is a speculation, but you can afford it, for as I see you understand you are the owner of a good property which there is every prospect will be worth a comfortable sum of money. Then, my lad," continued the older man earnestly, "I have great confidence in you, and I believe you will develop business ability."

"Thank you, sir. Suppose we try and find the agent of the McNorton Land company."

"You're right there, my lad. If you have made up your mind to buy, every hour you lose will add to the price of the lots. But what are you going to pay with?"

"Why, I have about four hundred in the bank, and fifty in my pocket. Then Mr. Henry will pay me nine hundred and fifty more in three days."

"Yes, I think that will be plenty, but you must not forget the expense of clearing the lot."

"No, sir. If I buy, I shall hire one man, and work with him myself."

"That's right. I don't think you need much advice, Pete."

In response to their inquiries, they soon located the McNorton agent. He was a shrewd, alert little man and in answer to their questions about the property, he at once said bluntly:

"Do you want to buy?"

"If prices suit," answered the major, equally tersely.

The agent drew forth a blue print from his pocket, and spread it open on a freshly sawn tree trunk.

"What are the prices of lots in this block?" asked Pete, indicating on the map the second block from the wharf.

"Seven hundred and fifty dollars to-day."

"What are the terms?" inquired the major.

"A third down, a third in six months, and the balance in a year. The unpaid portion at legal interest."

"Ten per cent.!" said the major, "that's pretty high."

"Can't help it. It's legal, and those are our terms," snapped the little man.

"What's this corner worth?" queried Pete.

"One thousand dollars."

"Same terms?"

"Yes."

"Well," said the major, "suppose we throw out the terms and pay cash down on the nail?"

"Nine hundred dollars for the corner. Six hundred and twenty-five dollars for the other."

"I think I'll take this one next to the corner, major," decided Pete, as promptly as the agent himself could have done. "Will you take fifty now, and the balance in three days, sir?"

"Six hundred and twenty-five dollars cash down, I said," snarled the agent.

Just as he made this announcement in the disagreeably abrupt way that some men think it necessary to adopt when transacting business Sam Henry passed and seeing our friends, stopped.

"Hullo, Hagan," he said, in his bluff way. "Good morning, major. Good morning, Captain Pete. What are you doing?"

The major explained the deadlock they had come to, and said to the agent,

"Mr. Hagan, will you take a check in payment for the lot?"

"Whose check?" asked he.

"Look here," broke in Sam Henry, seeing a thunder cloud rising on the doughty Hagan's face, "perhaps I can help you arrange this matter. I know Hagan here, and his bark is worse than his

bite. Now, Hagan, I endorse anything my friend Captain Pete wants to do."

"Endorse his check," rapped out Hagan, "that'll be all right, I know *you*."

"Well," interposed the major, "I'll write out a check for the amount, and perhaps Mr. Henry will be kind enough to endorse it. You see," he explained in a lower tone to Henry, "Pete's only got a balance of four hundred, and wanted to wait for the rest of your thousand."

"Yes, I see," answered Henry. "Well, that's just as safe as if he had it in his fist. All right, we'll fix it that way, then. Make out your deed, Hagan. The check will be ready."

"Come to my tent," said that individual, sparing of his words as ever.

He led them to a small tent, explaining characteristically:

"This is just for the morning. I'll have business tent by afternoon. Here's the deed."

He filled it out on his knee, and handed it to Pete. Major Fisher passed the endorsed check to him, and he scuttled away, the personification of brisk energy.

"Well, Pete," asked the major, "what next?"

"I want to look at my lot," replied Pete, who seemed to have fallen into Hagan's ways.

They hunted up the stakes, and located it, and Pete gloated over his new possession. It had a frontage of fifty feet on "P" street, and ran back a

hundred and thirty feet. There was more timber on it—great fir trees—than a person who was unacquainted with Puget sound forests would have supposed possible to crowd on a similar amount of land, but it was flat as a table, and in every way desirable, as far as the major could see.

"If I can get some tools, and hire a man," said Pete, "I'll start clearing this afternoon."

The major went back to the boat, while Pete hunted up his friend, Sam Henry. The latter assured him he could have whatever tools he needed. This point being settled, our hero began his search for a laborer. While he stood by the beach, uncertain for a moment where to go, a row boat came up, and two men got out. Pete's attention was attracted by one of them, and he recognized Long Tom. Tom knew him at once, and immediately came forward.

"Why, Tom," said Pete cordially, "I am glad to see you. How do you happen to be here?"

"Me and my mate came over from Whatcom looking for a job. We heard they wanted plenty of hands here."

"Well," said Pete, making up his mind at once, "it's lucky you ran across me. I want somebody right off, and I'll pay you two dollars a day. What do you say?"

"I'm your man, sir, and much obliged to you for the job."

"Then meet me here at one o'clock," said Pete.

"I've got a lot that I want to cut the timber off of first, and afterwards dig out the stumps."

"All right, sir," answered Tom, "I'll be on hand. Is there a boarding house here, sir?"

"Try at that big tent. Have you any money, Tom?"

"Oh, yes, sir," he replied cheerfully, "I'm well fixed. I've been working over in New Whatcom, and I haven't touched a drop of the booze since I saw you."

"I'm glad of that. Good-bye until one."

Pete went back to the *Susie*, and told his friends what he had done. They were glad to hear of his success in getting things under way, and the major said:

"Pete, we have been holding a consultation, and decided to alter our plans."

"What is it?" asked Pete, in some anxiety.

"You see," the major continued, "I ought to return to Port Townsend for I may be needed in the department, and Mrs. Fisher don't care to remain here in the *Susie* any longer. So, as we hear the *Glide* is bound for Townsend in the morning we have decided to go home. Tom and you can keep the *Susie* as long as you need her. She'll be handy to live on at any rate, while you are getting the lot into shape. Then you can take the tent if you prefer."

"Pete," said Tom, "I want a job. Will you hire me to help you clear the lot?"

"Yes, you can be water boy," said Pete. Then he continued seriously: "Well, I must be off with Mr. Henry. We go at twelve, and it's nearly that now."

"There's a good breeze," suggested Tom, "why don't you go around in the *Susie*? I can be getting dinner while we're sailing."

"Great head, Tom!" exclaimed Pete, playfully tapping it with his knuckles, "that's what I'll do right away."

He shortly returned with the contractor, and they sailed merrily off before the wind. Mr. Henry liked the property, and said:

"I'll take my acre the furthest on the north. That's nearest the centre of the town now, at any rate. How are you going to measure it off, so you'll get a description for the deed."

"Well there!" answered Pete, with much vexation, "I never thought of that!"

The major, and Henry both laughed, and then the latter said:

"Don't let it worry you, Pete. I know a surveyor here, and he'll run the line for us to-night after working hours. But you'll have to pay him."

"I'll do that," said Pete, relieved over this solution of a difficulty he had feared would keep him from getting Henry's money in time to repay the major promptly.

Captain Pete found Long Tom awaiting him on the beach. The major elected to stay aboard the *Susie*, and Tom Fisher was glad of a chance to go

up, and, as he said "take a squint at the lot."

"Pete," asked he, as they walked along, "why did you buy a lot next to the corner, instead of the corner, or one in the middle of the block?"

"Why, Tom, the corner was a little too rich for my blood, you know. And I took next it because I thought it more likely that some man worth money might buy the corner, and if he wanted to spread out, he'd be apt to pay a good price for the lot adjoining. Besides, it's nearer the wharf, and that's where business will centre."

"What a head you have got on your shoulders, old fellow!" said Tom. "Do you comprehend how you have changed, and what a wise, steady, old chap you've become?"

Pete laughed, and blushed at this glowing tribute from his friend, as he replied:

"Nonsense, Tom! I'm the same Captain Pete, heart and soul. At any rate, if there's any improvement, it's as much your fault as any one's."

"Ah!" responded Tom, "but you can't make a good chicken out of a bad egg!

CHAPTER SIX

MAJOR and Mrs. Fisher returned home the next morning. Captain Pete and Tom went to work with great energy. Long Tom proved to be faithful and industrious, and 'turned to' with a zeal that delighted the boys. Tom had never had much experience in this kind of work, but a sailor can put his hand to anything, and he soon used the cross-cut saw, and double-bitted axe with as much dexterity as if he had served his apprenticeship in a logging camp. The unaccustomed labor gave Pete many an ache and pain, and his hands were woefully blistered before he became hardened to it.

Tom Fisher did not shine at this toil. He rather looked down upon it, and felt in the secret recesses of his mind that if it were not unworthy, it was unnecessary that a boy of parts and education should work with his hands like a navvy. Tom was not indolent, but his training had never brought him face to face with tasks of this kind. He had said to Pete more than once, that mental work was not only more creditable, but actually more arduous than physical. He had not a particle of sympathy with the shovel or pick-axe man, and frankly said that he thought such people were fools. If they were

not they would quickly graduate from the humbler tools to higher ones. Pete felt that Tom's philosophy had its weak points, but as neither his mind or his tongue were so nimble as those of his chum, the matter had never been argued to a conclusion. Nevertheless, when Tom saw Pete persist, hour after hour, and day after day, in spite of sore muscles, and lacerated hands, and finally become able to achieve as much in a shift as any laborer who was drawing his daily two dollars for the work, he came to think that if the drudgery was perhaps ignoble, yet his friend Captain Pete was certainly a very determined, and worthy fellow, who dignified it.

By this time the McCann Brothers had made their appearance, and set up their saw-mill plant about half a mile from Pete's acre property, on Hidalgo bay. When Pete had all the trees that encumbered his lot cut down, he divided them into saw logs, and sold them to the McCann's.

The hardest task came after the trees were out of the way. The ungainly stumps projected their gummy heads, and the lot was, as Tom ruefully pointed out, in worse shape for civilized occupation than when they began. However, Pete and Long Tom exchanged the axe and saw for shovel and mattock, and cheerfully started in again. The stumps, with their huge interlacing roots, had to be dug out. Tom suggested that they be burned

down to a level with the soil as other clearers were doing nearby, but Pete said, after a moment's reflection:

"No! if I hold on to this lot, and ever want to put up a good building on it, I shall need a cellar, and then these stumps would be in the way. I'll finish the work thoroughly in the first place, and afterwards it won't need doing again."

Tom spat on his hands with exaggerated energy that made Pete laugh, and grasped a long-handled shovel to begin. It took them a week, but at last the huge, misshapen roots were all bared, and pried out. Then they were piled in a bunch in the middle of "P" street, and one night, two weeks after Major Fisher's departure, the two boys sat on a pile of dirt, and watched the holocaust of the stumps. Pete was thoughtful, but Tom was in a mood of great exultation.

"Pete, old boy," said he, "I feel as if I had been fighting a battle, and gained a great victory. Burn, you sons of guns!" he shook his fist at the blazing roots as he exhorted.

Pete smiled and answered:

"This is only a skirmish, Tom. We are just taking up our position on the battle ground. The fight will come when we get our office open, and start in after business."

"Right you are, old fellow, as usual. But do you really think we shall be able to make any money, Pete, selling property for other people?"

"I don't see why not, Tom. If I could sell my own land to Sam Henry, it seems to me I could sell somebody else's to another person just as easily. And I hear from Doane that selling commissions range from five up to fifteen per cent. But we must make up our minds, I think, to sell only the best property we can get hold of. I don't want to stick anybody with lots I would not buy myself."

"Well," rejoined Tom tentatively, "I want to be pretty conscientious, too. Shall we put up our sign?"

"Of course. We shall be a regular firm, handling our own property and dealing in real estate on commission."

"Hurra!" cried Tom, "that sounds like business. Graignic and Fisher, Dealers in Cortesana Realty. Business and Residence Property in favorable locations. Gold letters on a black background, eh, Pete?"

Pete grinned at this evidence of his chum's imagination, and then sobered down again.

"Tom," he said earnestly, laying his hand on his friend's knee, "life is a pretty easy thing to you because your future is all laid out. All you'll have to do is to keep in the road, and you can't help reaching the top of the mountain. This starting in business is a very solemn thing to me and I'm going to work myself down to skin and bone but I'll make a success of it."

"Why, you've got plenty of money now, and that

property of yours will keep you always. What do you want to work so hard for?" asked Tom, greatly impressed by his friend's ambition.

"Tom, if it's in me, I'm going to be a rich man! As rich as—as Collector Hogan."

"Well, Pete, I hear he has been losing money this last year. Perhaps he's not so rich after all."

"All the more reason I should be," promptly replied Pete, "you don't suppose I want Grace ever to feel the stings of poverty, do you?"

The last words had come with a rush, and Tom listened with open mouth and eyes. Captain Pete blushed high, realizing that he had let his chum into the secret of his aspirations. Tom had suspected that the former fisher boy had a soft place in his heart where Grace Hogan was concerned, but he had not understood that the sentimental regard of the lad had ripened, during Grace's absence in New York, into a feeling that was the guiding impulse of the young man of to-day. For the first time he comprehended that Captain Pete was a volcano of intensity when he concentrated his desires. He put his arm around his chum's neck, and said, with his whole heart in his voice:

"Dear old Pete! So that's what makes you so earnest to get ahead! You have set your heart on Grace Hogan. Well, old fellow, you are worthy of her, and I haven't the slightest doubt that you will get her, if you have made up your mind to do it."

"Tom, I can't talk about it, and I don't know ex-

actly what I do want. But at any rate, I am going to try to make myself as nearly her equal as possible."

"Lessen the distance, eh?" said Tom, more lightly. "Well, that's right. Courage! old man. Faint heart never won fair lady, you know."

"I don't think I lack the courage," responded Pete, and they went to the *Susie* to turn in.

The next day the boys, and Long Tom filled in the excavation made in taking out the roots, and smoothed off the surface of the lot until it was level. Then they ferried ashore the tent they had brought from Port Townsend, and set it up. Captain Pete was not satisfied until he had pitched it so that it was without a wrinkle anywhere. Then he dug a shallow ditch around the edges of the canvas for the rain to run off. After this he went to the saw mill with the sloop and bought some half-inch boards, dressed or planed on one side. Borrowing tools of Sam Henry, he made a floor, and when this was complete, built a counter four feet high, which divided the tent in halves.

"There!" said he at last, "now, Tom, we are ready for business."

"But," remarked his friend dubiously, "oughtn't we to have some blank books, and pens, and ink?"

"Of course," agreed Pete, "let's go and buy them. I noticed this morning there was a stationery store in a tent further up 'P' street."

It must not be supposed by the reader that Cor-

tesana had been standing still all the time the boys had been clearing the lot. In fact, as they walked along "P" street that morning they realized that what was virgin forest when they came to Hidalgo island a month ago, had actually become a street. A queer enough one, perhaps, to the eyes of men who belonged in Boston, or Chicago, or New York, but a street nevertheless if the word street means a busy human thoroughfare. Lot after lot had been cleared, though not consecutively, so that patches of immense firs or cedars often intervened, and few of them were so thoroughly grubbed as Captain Pete's. But the timber had been gotten off after a fashion, and tents erected to do duty as stores and dwellings pending the erection of more suitable structures of wood. In many cases the lot owner had a store open in the tent at the back of the lot, and was busy selling goods, while workmen were hard at it putting up a wooden building in the front for his future accommodation. Mr. Doane's men had already cleared and graded "P" street for several hundred yards from the water front, where Sam Henry had by this time driven thousands of piles with his pile-driving gang, and had braced and covered a portion of them so that steamers could land, and there was a roadway to the street. In some places the proprietors had put up light shacks or shanties instead of tents, and some of these contained stocks of goods worth thousands of dollars, while the resin still oozed out of the freshly

sawn boards. None of the side streets were as yet opened, so that the business of this community—numbering all of two thousand souls—concentrated on the two hundred lineal yards of “P” street.

As the boys passed along, and marked the feverish human activity which had replaced the stillness of the sylvan shades in so short a time, it filled them with interest.

“By cracky!” burst out Tom, characteristically, “Ain’t this a ‘caution to snakes?’ as Cap. Kennedy would say. Who would believe that so much work could be done in so short a time! One man might have pecked away here with his axe and saw for years, and you couldn’t have seen the hole he made if we’d been passing by in the *Susie*. But see what happens when five or six hundred all take hold at once. The forest seems to have melted before them.”

“Yes,” answered Pete, musingly, “combined effort, and a directing head will accomplish great results. I’d like to have a try at building a city myself.”

Tom started to look quizzical at this remark, but second thoughts, and loyalty to his chum changed the expression before it reached his tongue, and he answered, as they came to the stationery tent:

“I bet you’d build one that would beat Paris, Pete.”

“Now,” said Pete, as they returned to their tent with their purchases, “suppose we divide up

our labors, Tom. If you will manufacture and put up a sign I will go out, and see what I can do about drumming up some trade. The first thing is to get some property to sell, and I'll ask Mr. Hagan if he won't help us out."

"What, that little spit-fire!" exclaimed Tom, "if you get anything out of him, you are a good one. However go ahead, and try. I'll fix up a sign. By the way, Pete, what are you going to do with Long Tom now we're through the work on the lot?"

"I guess I'll keep him, and let him clear up some of my water front over on Hidalgo bay. He's a good workman, and I have got enough money to be able to afford it for a time anyhow. Well, here goes for Hagan!"

Mr. Hagan had moved into the front room of the unfinished first floor of a large wooden building that the Company was erecting near the wharf. He was sitting at a table spread over with plats and maps of the Hidalgo property, and was making an entry in a large blank book as Captain Pete entered. He looked up at our hero, and threw aside his pen:

"Well, what do you want?" he asked, in the snappish manner habitual with him.

Pete understood him better now than he did when he bought the lot, and went right at him without fear:

"I am going to start a real estate and brokerage

business at my office on "P" street, Mr. Hagan, and I want to know if you will help me to get some property around here for sale on commission?"

"Humph! you do, eh? That's cheeky! Do you suppose *you* can sell anything?" The tone of this question was positively insulting, but Pete kept his temper, and answered with a smile:

"I don't see why *I* shouldn't, if *you* can, Mr. Hagan."

Mr. Hagan bounced six inches from his chair at this Roland to his Oliver, and ejaculated:

"The devil you say!"

Then he thought a moment with a scowling brow while Pete waited patiently.

"Are you alone—in this business?"

"No, sir. Tom Fisher and I are going in together."

"Humph! Thought so! Better be alone, Captain Pete, tho' I've nothing against Fisher. He's all right, and his father's a good man, I hear. Look here! I'll give you a chance. I've watched you work on your lot, and I think you'll do. Here is a plat of the Land company's property in Cortesana, and here—" writing rapidly—"is a memorandum of our prices, and terms of sale. I will give you ten per cent. on every sale that you influence or conclude. There! that's a chance that every impudent jackanapes don't get, and you are my only agent in Cortesana so far. See what you can do. Meet all the steamers, and strike the in-

coming passengers. Find out all about every lot you sell, and never misrepresent for the sake of making a sale. Now, get out of here, and let me see if you *can* sell as well as I can."

Pete went out an inch taller, and meeting Mr. Doane, and Sam Henry on the dock, he told them what had occurred.

"By thunder!" exclaimed Sam, "you're in great luck. That chance is worth a heap of money to you, Pete."

"Yes," said Mr. Doane, "and it is only yesterday that I heard Hagan tell a well-known real estate man from Seattle, named Butler, that he'd see him damned before he'd let him sell for him here. He's a queer little fellow, that Hagan."

"Yes," concluded Henry, but he's Man, and good Man, clear through."

CHAPTER SEVEN

CORTESANA sprang into being with a rapidity that suggested a mushroom's growth. Day after day steamers brought loads of passengers. Only men and most of them young, and of that hardy and enterprising class that has developed this country in so wonderful a manner until they brought its frontier to the Pacific ocean. These men, prompt to see the opportunities in the formation of a new city like Cortesana, were equally energetic in taking advantage of them. They came to spy out the land; and either impelled by the enthusiasm that is as steam to the engine of a 'boom town,' or becoming convinced it would become a city in the future, they stopped to settle and engage in business.

The newcomers had money, and their initial step was the purchase of land in either acreage or lot property according to their means and purpose. The two boy partners soon became expert in "sizing up" probable purchasers, although Captain Pete proved himself so much more successful in picking up customers, and concluding sales, that Tom Fisher's sense of fairness took the alarm. It was at the end of their first two weeks' business, and

they sat in the tent office one night figuring up their profits.

"Look here, Pete," said Tom finally. "We have earned six hundred and eighty three dollars in commissions since we began. I find that the percentage on my sales amounts to precisely sixty-five dollars, while the balance represents your work."

"But we are partners," protested Pete, "and we work together, each doing the best he can. I've had good luck so far; perhaps next week you will beat me."

"That's all rot, Pete, and you know it," answered Tom earnestly. "You can sell all around me, and even old Hagan acknowledges that you are a born business man while he sniffs and snorts whenever I go into his office. Anyhow, here's what I'm going to do, for I'm no highway robber, and I want you to understand it. We'll keep the sign up just as it is, and go on apparently the same as ever. But after this, we'll each take credit for our own sales, so that if *you* earn six hundred and eighteen dollar in two weeks, and I only sixty-five, you won't have to divide up with me. You needn't start to argue. I'm going to have it so, for it's the only fair way."

And so it was finally arranged, for Tom was very resolute when he thought his honor was called into question, and Pete had to give in. In regard to the sign, which Tom had mentioned, it must be explained that he had made a large one, and put it

up in front of the tent. It read as follows in black letters on a white background:

**PETE (Graignic) AND TOM (Fisher),
DEALERS IN CORTESANA PROPERTY.
LOTS AND BLOCKS IN ALL PARTS OF
TOWN.
AND ACREAGE IN THE SUBURBS.**

Tom had gotten a small paint brush, and blocked out the letters neatly, and finished the sign with no small artistic skill. By this time Captain Pete was as well-known as Hagan himself, and his bright, steadfast face made him many friends among the better class of citizens. Dope was invariably at his heels, and the boy and dog were equally popular. Pete had studied his plats, and gone over the town location until it is probable he knew it better than its projectors. How each lot lay, where the gullies were, and where the level ground; what was low and marshy, and what was high and dry he had at his fingers' ends and it became common for Hagan to ask him for any information of that nature that he was in need of. And by-and-by, he began to rely on Pete's judgment and exact knowledge, as he did on no other person's. It was manifest to those who knew him well that he had taken a great fancy to the youth, and in his gruff, snappish way he did him many favors. Pete on his side understood and appreci-

ated his character, and while he liked him thoroughly he maintained an independence of demeanor in their intercourse that Hagan would have tolerated from no one else.

The boys slept on the *Susie*, leaving Dope in the tent to guard it against intrusion: They took advantage of an offer Mr. Hagan had made to Pete, and kept their money in a drawer in the ponderous safe in the building of the McNorton Land company. They commenced the day by breakfast aboard. After the meal they went to the tent, and fed Dope. If it were too early to open up for the day Pete would take a trip over to Hidalgo bay and meet Long Tom, and together they would survey the improvements the reformed smuggler was making, and project others in the future.

At eight o'clock the partners opened the office for the day, and from that time until six o'clock one of them was to be found in the tent to look after business.

There were now three daily boats touching at Cortesana, two from the south, and one from the north. The first two which brought in the mails from Seattle, Tacoma, and the East, arrived at Ocean dock as the wharf at the extremity of P street was christened, one at nine, and the other at ten in the morning. Each usually brought a crowd of visitors, and all of idle Cortesana gathered at the waterside to meet them. Tom and Pete took turns in going to these boats, and as a matter

of fact, they picked up most of their customers among the arrivals. Pete would select a promising looking traveller as he came down the gang plank, and manage to get near enough to address him with some casual observation. If this were favorably received, he would manœuvre so that it led into conversation as they walked together to the street. Then he would offer his services in showing the city, and soon discover if the traveller had come to purchase. If he had made a mistake, he would hurry back to repair his error. But if on the other hand the man wanted to buy, and had not selected his property Pete would say he was selling real estate and refer him to some men nearby of self-evident prominence, such as Mr. Hagan, or Sam Henry, or Mr. Doane, as to his reliability. If possible he'd take him to them then and there, to establish the fact. By this time he had generally managed to impress the buyer with his knowledge and sincerity, and only needed to find out what class of property was desired to close the sale. Pete never misrepresented property and built up a reputation for straightforwardness which was of great value to him.

At the end of May the city had actually grown around, and enclosed them. P street was lined for ten blocks from the wharf with respectable wooden buildings, intermingled with occasional more pretentious brick structures. There were only three tents in view of P street, one of which

belonged to our boys. On the side avenues however, which were being graded, there were plenty of canvas dwellings. The business men began to bring their families. Cortesana, only a few months old, had a population of five thousand people.

On the corner next Pete's lot, a great barn of a one-story building had been erected by the most popular saloon keeper in town. Its flaunting sign read, "WORKINGMAN'S HOME." Strains of music from a piano very much out of tune floated out on the calm evening air, and testified to the fact that the workingman was enjoying his sovereignty to the uttermost. Across the street a small shack about one-quarter of the size of the saloon housed the daily paper Cortesana already boasted. It was a four-page sheet, printed by man power on an old-fashioned Army press, but the price of it was six "bits" a week, or a "bit" a single copy, and the enterprising proprietor was making money hand over fist. Next door to this symbol of Civilization was a dance house, which in turn was elbowed by the barracks of the Salvation army which paid a high rent for its building.

Pete said to Tom as they watched the laborers throng into the 'Home' one evening:

"What children the working classes are! They waste their money just as freely on the War Cry as they do on their beer, and never think as they

put out the dimes, how painfully they have been earned."

"Well, it's their own money, and they've got a right to do as they please with it," said Tom.

"Do you believe so?" returned Pete, after a moment's thought. "They're really only children, tho' they're grown up ones, and it would make them mad to tell them so. But I think they ought to be protected against the greed of such men as that saloon keeper, just the same as we would defend small children from the attack of a wild beast. And they ought to be taught to look after themselves."

"Well," objected Tom, "but in this land of Liberty, every man is created free and equal, according to the Constitution. So how are you going to treat these great fellows as children, if they object to the process?"

"Why," returned Captain Pete, "I'll reserve that for future consideration, as they say in Congress."

The boys tied the tent flaps, leaving Dope inside, and went to their beds on the boat.

CHAPTER EIGHT

WHEN Pete and Tom came on deck the next morning a small vessel was in sight, coming down towards them before the wind. The captain's eye was instantly riveted upon it, and in an instant his face lighted up in such an extraordinary manner that Tom asked:

"What's up, Pete? What are you looking so mightily pleased about?"

"Why, that's the *Tyee* yonder," answered he joyously, "and I'll bet father has come down to see us. You know I asked him to in my letter last week."

"No! That's bully! I'll put on another slice of ham, and some more eggs, and he can take breakfast with us."

And the hospitable fellow leapt below to make his words good.

The wind was brisk, and Mr. Graignic rounded to within a few feet of the *Susie*, and dropped his anchor. Before its plunge startled the goggle-eyed cod at the bottom, Pete was alongside in the dingey, and in a moment the fisherman had his son in his arms:

"Why, Pete," was his first exclamation, "you've grown into a man since I saw you." He held the

boy at arm's length, and gazed at him scrutinizingly. Pete met his look with one of loving frankness, and the father heart was perfectly satisfied. His boy was all right. The earnest and upright life of the lad shone in his face, and the old fisherman inwardly blessed the train of circumstances that had rescued him from existence on the ranch.

"Stop hugging your father, Pete, and bring him over to breakfast. It is all ready." This from Tom.

The meal over, they set off for the tent, for Pete was anxious to show his father the town, and have a chance to tell him of his successes in a business way. They were surprised, when they arrived at the office to find the constable in front of it, and Dope in a threatening attitude between him, and the entrance.

"Captain Pete," said the officer to our hero, "there appears to have been some trouble here, but that smart dog of yours has taken charge of things, and won't let me investigate. Just before daylight I heard a yell here and then a pistol shot, and then the dog barked savagely. I came up and saw that the door flaps were torn open, but the dog was between them and would not let me in. I've been in the neighborhood ever since keeping an eye on the place, but nothing has happened."

Pete spoke to Dope who came to him whimpering as if he wanted to tell him all about it, and they went into the tent. As they stepped in-

side, Mr. Graignic picked up the loose end of the door flap, and showed the corner of it, which had trailed on the ground, to be discolored by a great, bloody splash. On the board floor was a small pool of thickened blood from which the stain had apparently come.

"Hallo!" said Pete, suddenly. "Come here, Dope."

He took the dog's head in his hand, and showed his father a furrow in the hair from the back of the left ear leading downwards to his neck. The fisherman examined it closely and then bent down, and smelled the dog's head, Dope all the time standing perfectly still and giving an occasional intelligent whimper to indicate his confidence in the fisherman's examination. Tom Fisher, and the constable watched developments silently.

"Dope has had a close call," said the elder Graignic, "ze ball zat made zat trail in his hair came from a gun held close enough to his head to powder mark him."

The others now saw what the keen eye of the fisherman had already taken note of, a few black marks on the tawny hide and a faint smell of powder.

"Yes," said Pete, as he stooped and picked up something near the bloodstain, "and he seems to have left his brand on the fellow that pointed it, too. I wish I had him here."

Captain Pete's features wore a look as he made

the last remark that was rarely seen on them. His face was very pale and his jaws set like iron.

"I'll tell you what's happened, Pete," said the fisherman, "some one has come into ze tent quietly, and ze dog just waited until he got inside, and zen grabbed him—by ze leg. Ze chap tried to get away, you can see his heel marks plainly." He pointed to the print of the edge of a heel, and slight splinters, such as might have been dug out by projecting shoe nails, in the smooth fir board. "Zen ze man clubbed Dope on ze head wiz his six shooter." Here Pete's father held up Dope's face again, and showed the imprint of a heavy blow on the skull. "But old Dope held on and ze robber found he had to shoot, or have his leg chewed off. When he fired Dope loosed his hold, and ze fellow made off. Ze dog wouldn't follow him far, for his duty was to look after ze tent."

Tom and the constable listened in wonder as the sagacious old fisherman unreeled the story just as if he had been present, and witnessed it.

"By the powers!" exclaimed the constable, who was a retired prize fighter, very brave, but not overladen with brains, "you'd make a grand detective, Mr. Graignic. I'd like to have you on the force."

Pete said nothing, but held out to his father the article he had picked up off the floor.

"Yes," said the old man, looking at the blood-stained scrap of dungaree cloth with renewed interest, "ze man wore overalls, and left zis piece be-

tween Dope's teez, and I shouldn't wonder if some of ze meat came wiz it. Take a look around, Pete, and see if anyzing is missing."

"No, sir," answered his son, after a rapid examination, "everything is just as usual. But what about catching our visitor? I'd like to make his acquaintance."

"Well, sir," said the constable, who was a warm friend of the captain's, "you'd better leave that to me. I'll stay up to-day, and take a squint around. If I can find anyone with a stiff leg, or torn breeches, I'll try and discover how they were come by. It's odds that I find him, and if I do, we'll railroad him to Walla Walla where the dogs won't bite him."

"All right, Bill," returned Pete, "do so, and if you catch him I'll make up for your loss of sleep out of my own pocket."

As the constable was leaving, Mr. Hagan, accompanied by a tall gentleman of distinguished appearance, came up.

"Captain Pete," he said, "I want to introduce you to Mr. Andrews, who has just come here from the east."

Pete pulled himself together, presented his father to the gentlemen, and then related the occurrence of the morning. Both Mr. Andrews, and Mr. Hagan were interested, and the former particularly could not keep his eyes off the dog and his master. After some general conversation they took their leave,

but just before going the Land company's agent asked Pete to come to his office at eleven o'clock, as he wanted to see him on business.

"There!" said Tom, on their departure, "you lucky beggar! I expect that's a new customer that Hagan has not got time to show around."

"No," replied Pete, "he doesn't look like a land buyer to me."

Pete was, as usual, correct in his diagnosis of the stranger for when he kept the appointment Mr. Hagan briefly explained that Mr. Andrews was from Washington, D. C., on business connected with the customs service, and that he did not want his errand generally known on the Sound. Then the stranger and Captain Pete went into Hagan's private room and had a long talk. Mr. Andrews began by saying:

"Captain Pete, Mr. Hagan gives you a very high character for one so young, and he tells me I may trust implicitly to your honor and judgment. Under these circumstances, I am going to talk very frankly, and the consequences may be very grave to you and others if you betray my confidence. The fact is that during the administration of Mr. Hagan, as collector of customs on Puget Sound, there is reason to believe that a gigantic conspiracy has been formed for the purpose of smuggling, and thereby defrauding the United States of vast sums of money. It is known or so strongly suspected that it may be said to be known, that this league of malefactors is

composed of rich and prominent citizens in Port Townsend, Seattle, and elsewhere, and that they have by the lavish use of money succeeded in corrupting so many of the employees of the department of customs that they can run things about as they please. There is reason to accuse Collector Hogan himself, if not with actual complicity in fraud, at least of such culpable negligence as is scarcely less criminal. My mission here is entirely secret, and I am entrusted with unusual powers by the heads of the Government in executing it. In fact, I am commissioned to break up smuggling on Puget Sound, and send those who have been engaged in it to prison for their crimes. Now you understand the situation and the extent of the trust I have put in you."

While Mr. Andrews was speaking Pete's brain was working at high pressure, though his Indian ancestry stood him in good stead and enabled him to preserve an impassive countenance. Something told him that here was the opportunity of his life. If he wanted to establish a claim on Grace Hogan, he must shield and save her father from the toils that were evidently spreading about the old man. Not a moment did Pete believe that the collector had been wittingly dishonest. He knew his friend too well. But he saw like a flash the opportunity that had been given to his deputies during the past year by his illness and frequent enforced absence from the helm of the department. He saw too

that all his intelligence, and all his tact would be necessary in the task which he willingly undertook, of saving him from dishonor and ruin. When Mr. Andrews paused therefore, he looked frankly in his face, and said:

"I am very grateful for your, and Mr. Hagan's good opinion of me, sir, but how can I help you? What can I do?"

"You can assist me materially, Pete. In the first place I am told you have had some experience in the smuggler-catching line already, and are thoroughly acquainted with the San Juan group of islands through which most of the traffic is carried on. Then you are well known to the department, and they all put confidence in you."

A dull red mounted to Pete's swarthy cheek, and he interrupted the speaker:

"Yes, sir, I know most of the men in the department, having lived in Port Townsend, but I hope you don't think I'd use their friendship for the purpose of entrapping them."

"Not at all, Captain Pete. I don't want you to gather evidence against the revenue people, but I need some one associated with me out here whom I can trust, and who will not be suspected by anybody to be a possible emissary of the Government. Such a person must be well known, to be above suspicion by the wily rascals I hope to ensnare. I shall have many things to execute which would lay me open to distrust but that you, being known, could do with-

out exciting remark. What I offer you, is to be my assistant in this important matter, and I give you my word that you will gain great honor besides considerable money in the task. If we succeed as well as I anticipate, the service will be a stepping stone to future preferment under the Government. If you accept my offer your pay will be thirteen dollars a day, and expenses, and will commence to-morrow."

This liberal offer made Pete's eyes open: "Do you want me to give up here, sir?" he asked.

"No, but you had better arrange your affairs here so they will permit of frequent absences. Cannot your young partner, Tom Fisher, take charge of the business while you are away? And apropos of him I wish to tell you, Captain Pete, that though Major Fisher, his father, is to know nothing of this matter, his skirts are clear and he is not under suspicion."

"Yes," replied Pete, relieved by this piece of information. "I might make some arrangement with Tom. And what about Dope, sir? Could I take him along?"

"Wouldn't he be in the way, and an expensive travelling companion?"

"No, sir! You don't know that dog. I can imagine times when he will far more than pay his expenses."

"Well, all right. The Government can stand it, I guess. Now, how can you and I leave here to-

gether in two or three days—this is Tuesday, say Saturday—without exciting comment?”

“Why,” suggested Pete, after a moment’s thought, “how would it do if you were to put yourself up as an eastern capitalist who had engaged me to steer you around the Sound looking out for real estate investments?”

“Just the thing, Pete,” exclaimed Mr. Andrews, clapping the boy on the shoulder. “Hagan was right! I believe you will prove just the chap I want for this job. Now, go, and spread the report that you have got hold of a wealthy easterner, and arrange your affairs so that we can take the Saturday morning boat to Port Townsend, where our business will call us first.”

“All right, sir.”

Captain Pete went slowly back to the tent. The fisherman at once perceived that something very unusual had occurred, though he held his tongue. Pete informed them that Mr. Andrews was a rich man who had come west for the purpose of investing in the growing state of Washington, and had hired Pete to show him about. In the course of the afternoon when they were by themselves on the *Tyee* Captain Pete under the seal of confidence, related to his father the whole details of his morning interview with Mr. Andrews. Our hero did not feel quite sure whether his new business was a perfectly straightforward one. That was the point on which he desired his father’s opinion. The old

fisherman had defined ideas on most subjects, and he was perfectly clear on this.

"Why, Pete," he said, "I zink catching zieves is pretty honorable work myself, and ze meaner ze thief ze more honor zere is in it. If anybody had ze power of stopping those swindlers, and didn't do it, he ought to go to state's prison himself. If I were in your place I'd take ze job."

It will be observed that Pete did not let his father into the chief motive he had in accepting Mr. Andrews' proposition, which was to protect and save Grace Hogan's father.

CHAPTER NINE

PETE appeared to have entered upon another period of excitement after the interval of tranquillity which had ensued on the incarceration of Bill Kelley, Three-fingered Bill, and Mike McGovern for the second time. The next morning, on arriving at the tent he found it had once more been broken into, and this time though nothing of value was taken, Dope, the faithful sentinel had disappeared. Pete made the welkin ring in whistling for him but he did not obey a summons he had never before disregarded, and it was evident to his master he had either been decoyed away or captured.

Pete was loth to admit that Dope had willingly abandoned his post, and neither did his father consider it likely. Still there were no signs of a struggle, and altogether the affair was most mysterious. At this point Tom discovered a long slit in the wall of the tent at the back, large enough to admit of the passage of a man's body. It had been concealed by a box drawn in front of it, and so was not discovered at the first glance. As they were wondering and conjecturing, Pete feeling greatly cast down, the constable came up. He was as much surprised as our three friends, and said that about two o'clock

he had come to the tent and everything was all right, for he had heard Dope growl at his approach. Since then he had been at the other end of P street.

"And Captain Pete," said he, "I thought I had some news for you, but now I ain't so sure about it."

"Why? Did you find the man who was bitten night before last?"

"Well, this is how it was, sir," answered the constable. "Dan Homan runs the crap table * in the Workingman's Home. I was in there yesterday, and he wasn't on hand as usual, so I inquired where he was. The barkeeper said he had sent word he had hurt his leg going home, and wouldn't be down to open up the game. Dan bunks in a shack with Jack Hardy, who is a pretty shady character that used to live on Guemes, and run with Bill Kelley and Mike McGovern, the smugglers. He is a thin slight fellow, awful mean, and has been in trouble several times. Well, I went to the shack, and Dan and Jack were in an old skiff about halfway across to Guemes island. I allowed they'd come back at night, so I didn't bother. Sure enough, Dan was at his game last night at eleven o'clock when I looked in the Home, and he had on a new pair of breeches, and was limping. Just then I was called out to arrest a 'drunk,' and when I came back at a quarter past twelve, the game was closed—two

* Craps is a gambling game played on a table. In the northwest in the boom days, many prosperous saloons had such gambling accessories for the more rapid fleecing of their customers.

hours earlier than usual—and Dan away. The bar-keeper said he had gone with Jack Hardy and another chap named Dewitt, a rancher up sound. That's all, but I bet Dan Homan has got the marks of the dog's teeth on his leg."

While the constable was telling his story the fisherman and his son exchanged significant glances. The same thought shot through their minds instantaneously, and at Bill's conclusion Pete said:

"Well, father, we've run up against some of that old smuggler gang again."

"Yes, my son, I guess those fellows know who you are. But zat gives us a clew. Perhaps zey captured Dope to annoy you, and revenge zeir chums."

"I'm afraid they'll kill Dope," said Pete, "for they won't be able to make friends with him, and they'll be afraid he'll escape and come back."

"Yes," said Tom mournfully, "it's possible. But the first thing for us to do is to track Dan Homan, and Jack Hardy, and this Dewitt. Three such skunks ought to leave a strong scent."

Bill volunteered to go to the shack at once, and he was sent off. The rest of the party waited at the tent and in half an hour he returned, saying they had apparently not been home the night before, and that the skiff was lying high and dry on the beach.

It was now nine o'clock, and Tom went down as usual to meet the Seattle boat. Scarcely had he

gone when Mr. Andrews put in an appearance, and Pete at once informed him of the misfortune. He entered into the investigation with great zest, and was soon in possession of all the facts. While he was asking questions he accidentally turned back the flap of the tent which had been thrown open. As he did so, he exclaimed:

"Hello! What's this?"

There was a sheet of paper pinned to a fold of the canvas. The fisherman glanced at its contents, and handed it to Pete in silence. Pete read aloud:

"Capten Pete.

"We're onto you, you dam young hound. We got your dog this time, an' we'll hang him to-day. The next time we'll git you. youde beter make trax.

"BILL KELLEY'S CHUMS."

If this missive was intended to intimidate Captain Pete, it failed in its purpose, for he clinched his teeth like a steel trap, and an expression came into his face that denoted that his whole nature was aroused. Mr. Andrews and even his father were impressed by his look of determination as he folded up the paper, and put it carefully in his vest pocket.

"I'll make that fellow eat that," he said quietly.

They sat a moment each busy with his own thoughts, until the fisherman who was gazing meditatively out of the door, aroused himself and remarked:

"Why, here comes Long Tom! I thought you said he was working for you over at Hidalgo bay."

Long Tom came up hastily and shook hands cordially with the fisherman, who introduced him to Mr. Andrews. Then he turned to Captain Pete.

"A fellow that was over my way has just told me that the tent was broken into last night and Dope taken away. I came over to see you as soon as I heard it, for I believe I am on his track."

"Tell us all about it, quick!" said Pete, eagerly.

"It happened this way, sir. A little while ago I was out with the gun to see if I couldn't get a grouse for my dinner. I was in the thick patch of timber about a mile and a half from McCann's mill. There is an old trail through that is pretty well grown up, though it is partly kept open by the cows. It leads away down by the Three-mile pond, what they call Transparent lake now, and what they talk about getting water out of for the city."

"Yes, I know. Get on!" burst out Pete, in an agony of impatience.

"Don't hurry him, Pete," said Mr. Andrews, "let him go his own gait, and we will get there sooner. What happened then, Long Tom?"

"Why, I was off the trail sir, hunting a grouse that had flown across when I heard some one talking. I looked, and it was three men coming along towards the pond. They had a big yellow dog with them that they were leading on a chain. I didn't think much at the time, but now I am pretty sure

the dog was muzzled, because I saw he was acting queerly, hanging back, and trying to get loose. But he never made a sound which wasn't natural, was it, sir? Now, I'm pretty sure that was Dope for he was just about his size, and color."

"Come on," said Pete, "show us that trail!"

Mr. Andrews, and the old fisherman were all ready, but the latter said to his son: "Are you armed, my boy? We may need a gun in this affair."

Pete opened his coat, and showed that his revolver was strapped to his side, and then the constable spoke up:

"I'll go along, sir, if you have no objection. I want those fellows myself. This is a case of burglarious entrance."

Pete smiled faintly at Bill's magniloquence, and they all hurried off. A brisk walk brought them to the point where Long Tom had seen the miscreants.

"Now," said Pete, "if you will let me go ahead, and you follow slowly out of sight I think it will give us more chance to catch them. If I come upon them I'll stop and let you know, and then we can surprise them. The trail forks half a mile beyond here, and I'll throw a fresh branch down on the one I've taken."

"Hadn't I better come with you, sir?" asked the constable.

"No, Bill," answered Pete, shortly, "I'm better than you at this sort of work."

Our hero had thrown off his coat and hung it on a bush alongside the trail, and now with all the Indian uppermost in him, he glided past the mossy trunks of the huge firs and through the dense undergrowth like a savage brave on the warpath. Not a twig crackled beneath his light feet, nor a dried leaf rustled as he moved smoothly and silently along. A mile of this swift progress brought him to a part of the forest that was still denser, and more impenetrable than before. Suddenly he stopped and listened intently. A faint sound had struck his keen ear that did not belong to the noises of the wood. Then his eye caught a jay bird—called by the Indians the "sentinel of the forest"—in a tree ahead. It was fluttering about in an agitated manner, and giving utterance to short, sharp calls. Then a small red squirrel ran up on the naked trunk of a tree near him, and began to scold in the shrill tones familiar to those who have dwelt in the woods of the northwest.

Pete's actions became still more cautious and wary, for he knew his enemy was near. The forest craft he displayed was marvellous, and would have been impossible to one of pure white blood. He melted from one tree trunk and reappeared behind another as impalpable as a ghost, without the faintest sound. Just ahead of him there was a

swampy spot, and a dim trail ran at right angles from it into the heart of the wood. It was in this direction that Pete had seen the jay and the squirrel. He followed it a couple of hundred yards, and came to one of those open glades which for unexplained causes, often appear in the midst of the densest forest. It was a beautiful little sylvan opening, lightly overgrown with whortleberry bushes. Near the middle of it grew one small, bushy yew tree. By this tree were three men, one of whom, a thin, fair skinned fellow with straight features and a light grey eye, to Pete's unutterable joy, held poor muzzled Dope at the end of a heavy chain.

Captain Pete dropped back to bring up his reinforcements as silently as he had approached. While he is gone we will remain with Dope and his captors.

"Well," said Jack Hardy, the man who held the mastiff, "this is a lark! I've done a good many things in my life, but I never hung a dog before."

The thin skin stretched tight over Dewitt's nose, and his lips bared his wolfish teeth as his sinister face wrinkled into a smile. A more cruel and vicious countenance than this ruffian possessed is seldom seen, although it was outclassed by that of Jack Hardy.

"Yes," said Dewitt, "it would tickle Mike McGovern if he knew it. I heard he hung a dog once and that gave me the idea. I wish his master was here ter see it. That would make it complete."

"I don't half like it," observed Dan Homan, the third of the precious trio. He was a blackguard of larger mould than his companions, but did not seem to possess the desperate malignity which envenomed them. "It seems pretty cold blooded to drag the brute clear out here just to hang him. If I'd blown his head off when he bit me, now, it would have served him right, but I ain't sure this is giving him a fair shake."

Dope listened to this conversation as if he understood it. His eye glared inextinguishable hate on Hardy, and Dewitt, and beneath the heavy muzzle his lips were drawn back, and his teeth gleamed like ivory.

"Rats!" snorted Jack Hardy in disgust, "are you turning soft because of a cussed dog? Why, it'll be fun to see him kick as his wind is shut off!"

Dewitt went to the yew tree, and with an axe he had brought, began stripping off the lower limbs. The rascal was an expert axeman, and soon finished his task, clearing the trunk up to where a large and strong limb sprang out about eight feet from the ground. He sheared the twigs from this, threw down the axe, and took out of his pocket a small rope about the size of a clothesline.

"Can you make a hangman's knot?" asked Hardy, with a smile on his thin lips.

"No. Can you?" asked Dewitt.

"Yes, I learned in Arizona—from the sheriff. Give it here, and take the dog."

Jack took the rope, and with deft fingers fashioned a beautiful and workmanlike slipknot. Then he drew out a piece of yellow soap. With this he carefully rubbed the running part of the noose:

"There!" said he, approaching the dog with the rope in his hand, "that is good enough to hang the dog's master with, and it's a pity he isn't here!"

As the cruel dastard spoke, the great dog gave a sudden bound which twitched the loosely held chain from Dewitt's hand, and came full at Jack's breast. The impact was so great that he was bowled over like a ninepin, and Dope held him down with his paws, and actually moaned through his muzzle to get his teeth loose. As Homan and Dewitt sprang forward to draw him away, a quiet voice behind them said:

"Never mind. I'll take him off in a second."

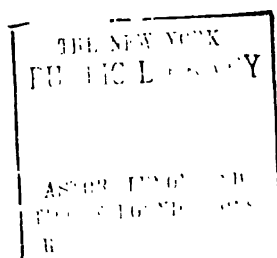
They looked around, and saw Captain Pete, Bill the constable, and two other men coming from the edge of the timber, twenty yards away. Dan Homan's right hand flew to his side, but with a lightning-like movement Captain Pete drew his revolver, and held him covered before he could reach his weapon. Then the constable spoke up:

"None of that, Dan! You may as well throw up the sponge, for you're clean knocked out."

At the same moment the old fisherman quietly headed off Dewitt, who was edging towards the forest:



**DOPE HELD HIM DOWN WITH HIS PAWS AND MOANED THROUGH
HIS MUZZLE.**



"Not so fast, my man," said he, "stick by your friends."

"—— my friends!" profanely muttered Dewitt, resigning himself to the inevitable.

Dope still had two paws on Hardy's breast, and held him down in spite of his struggles.

"Let him up, Dope," said Pete.

The dog at once came to his master, and Hardy arose.

"Hands up!" exclaimed Pete, suddenly and savagely, with his ready gun thrown forward. Hardy had a knife in his hand. "Drop that! Bill, will you take that knife, and see if he has any other weapons?"

Bill did so, and reported favorably.

"Now," said Pete, "Mr. Hardy—I suppose that's your name—did you write me this note?"

Here Pete, to the surprise of his companions, held out the threatening letter that had been pinned to his tent flap. Hardy looked sullen, and did not answer, but Dewitt called out:

"He's the only one of us three that *can* write."

"Then," continued Pete, looking straight into Hardy's light grey eyes, "as your comrade is so obliging as to settle that point, will you do me the favor to eat this letter, and with it any idea that you and your chums can drive me out of Cortesana?"

Jack gazed at the extended letter, and back at the captain.

"Eat it," said Pete, invitingly.

"I'm d——d if I do!" said the ruffian, clenching his teeth desperately.

"At him, Dope," said the boy.

Dope, from whom the muzzle had mercifully not been removed, leapt upon the man and threw him heavily to the ground. Then Pete called him off again, and Jack arose.

"Will you eat it now?"

"No!"

"Come here, Dope." Pete stooped and took the muzzle off the dog. "Now Dope," he said, "watch that man. He's your enemy, and wanted to hang you."

The huge animal quivered with rage, and the hair actually stood upright on his neck, as he growled low and ominously:

"Here! I'll eat it," said Jack.

CHAPTER TEN

WHILE marching the prisoners back to the calaboose—during which journey Dope performed guard duty with great fervor—Dewitt told the story of the raid on the tent and the capture of the mastiff. It appeared Jack Hardy had all along known that Captain Pete was the main instrument in laying Bill Kelley and Mike McGovern by the heels, and had tried to get Dan Homan, his side partner, to engage with him in some scheme to injure the boy. Dan was not acquainted with Kelley and McGovern, and though he sympathized with them on general principles, he did not see any reason why he should put his own carcass in jeopardy for some one he did not know. It happened, however, unfortunately for him, that one night when partly intoxicated, the temptation came on him suddenly to loot Pete's tent, which he knew to be protected only by the dog. The whiskey he had taken during the day made him reckless, and he underrated the danger from the animal. So he made the entrance, and was seized by Dope by the calf of the leg. Not succeeding in clubbing him off, he tried to shoot him. He supposed he had succeeded, for the dog fell back when he discharged his gun—a Colt of 45-calibre. He slunk in a towering rage

to his shack as rapidly as his wounded leg would allow. Jack egged him on when it was discovered that the dog was uninjured, and Dewitt opportunely turning up, they concocted the cruel scheme which was to culminate in the hanging. This outrage, and the threatening letter—which Hardy had eaten—they hoped would so intimidate and unnerve Pete as to drive him out of town and break up his business.

Dan and Hardy had been able to lasso the mastiff by enticing him from the tent, and then approaching him simultaneously from in front and behind. After the capture, in which Dewitt claimed to have taken no part, they slunk off P street, and gained the woods. Of course Dewitt tried to shield himself, but it came out, through the anger of the others at the pusillanimity of their late comrade, that he himself suggested the proposition to hang the noble brute, an action so base and cold-blooded that it revolted Homan, though he had seemingly been cajoled into the scheme by his crueler companions.

The three men were arraigned before the police judge. He remanded them to prison pending their trial in a court of higher jurisdiction. Pete bound his companions not to mention the incident of the letter-eating. To tell the truth, now that he had gotten over his passion, he was ashamed of the act. It had made a strong impression upon the witnesses, however, and Mr. Andrews formed an opinion of

his implacability, and determination that made him congratulate himself on having secured his aid in the onerous task of clearing Puget Sound of smugglers.

Pete now arranged matters so he should lose as little as possible during his absence. A new contract was entered into with Tom Fisher on a basis which the latter proposed himself. Tom suggested that as Pete had built up the business to a point where most of their customers came recommended to them by former purchasers, it was only fair that they should go back to their original arrangement, and each take fifty per cent. of the profits while Pete was away. They drew up and signed partnership papers to this effect.

On Friday Mr. Hagan sent for Pete, and introduced him to a gentleman who was talking about establishing a shingle mill on Hidalgo bay. He wanted a location on the water front, and had found that the most suitable place was on Captain Pete's land. So he proposed to purchase two acres with a hundred feet of water front for the necessary wharfage facilities. He offered three thousand dollars for the land. Pete asked for a couple of hours' time to consider the matter. Then he took Mr. Hagan aside and asked his advice. Hagan told him it was a good offer, and more than the land was actually worth at the present time. In short, he was rather inclined to be in favor of making the sale.

But Pete was still undecided, and after more cogitation, came back to Mr. Metcalf, the would-be purchaser, and told him he had decided not to sell.

"Then," said Mr. Metcalf, "will you lease me the two acres for ten years?"

"No," replied Pete, "but I will for five, and enter into an agreement with you to either take over the business at a valuation, or go into partnership with you at the end of that time."

"How much rent do you want?" asked Metcalf, who was a man of few words.

"One thousand dollars a year."

"Whew! That's pretty high. Ain't it, Mr. Hagan?"

"I don't know," replied Hagan, winking at Pete his approbation of the proposal, "this young man seems perfectly capable of looking after his own business. I advised him to sell to you."

It was now Mr. Metcalf's turn to ask two hours for consideration, and after he had gone out Hagan told Pete he thought he would take the lease, for he was hot after the location. Then they discussed the terms of the proposed agreement, which the agent thought a very good thing for our hero.

At the end of an hour Metcalf returned with a lease and agreement already drawn up, and a certified check for one thousand dollars in his hand. A few changes were made on Pete's suggestion, and the money was paid over, and deposited in Pete's private drawer in Mr. Hagan's burglar-proof safe.

"Pete," said Hagan, after Metcalf's departure, "if you don't mind telling me, how much cash have you got?"

"You are such a good friend of mine, I would tell you anything," answered Pete. "Wait a moment, and I'll balance up, and let you know exactly."

He went to the drawer, counted his cash, and looked at his bank deposit book, and then came to the table again.

"Why," he said modestly, "I have had pretty good luck since I have been down here. I have \$4853.00."

"A very pretty nest egg," remarked Mr. Hagan, "and if you go on as you have begun, I have no doubt you will hatch it into a fortune. There are grand chances for young men like you in this western country. But the reason I asked you about it was this. I think it would be wise in you to build on that lot where the tent is. You are getting nothing out of it now except office rent, and unless you intend to sell you ought to do something with it."

"I have thought of it, sir, and I don't believe I want to sell. It's good property, and if the town goes on, it's going to be valuable."

"No doubt you are right, Pete. I believe you are. All the more reason then, that you should improve it."

"What kind of a building would you put up, sir?"

"Oh, a good one, by all means. It don't pay in the long run, to erect cheap buildings. I'd make it a handsome brick if I were you. If your cash don't hold out, you can borrow enough to complete it, and soon pay it back by the rent money."

"I don't like that plan, sir," said Pete very earnestly, "I have made up my mind never to get into debt, even if I lose by not doing so. How much would a handsome, four-story, brick, store building covering the whole lot back to the alley, cost, sir?"

"Well, perhaps ten or twelve thousand dollars."

"Why couldn't I put up one or two stories now, and finish them in such a way that the others can be added on later?"

"By George, Petel!" exclaimed Mr. Hagan, "that's really a brilliant idea. You could do that all right, and lay aside the rent from the first two stories until the building pays for the balance. If you wish, while you are away with Mr. Andrews I'll get plans, and estimates ready for you, and when you return to Cortesana you can start to build."

"Will you really do that for me, Mr. Hagan? How kind you are!"

"Stuff, you young fool! I don't often take a notion, but it's funny if I can't do a good-natured thing once in a while, if I am an old crank."

"You're a mighty kind man, Mr. Hagan. That's what I think!" returned Pete, with deep feeling.

"Well!" said the agent, looking rather ashamed at himself for his emotion, "the truth is, I'm getting to be a lonely old fellow, and I find business, no matter how assiduously you may attend to it, cannot satisfy heart and soul altogether. I like you, and I am going to help build up your fortune."

Mr. Graignic went home on the *Tyee* on Saturday, the same day Pete left for Port Townsend with Mr. Andrews. The old man was elated to see the way his son had established himself, and at the evidence of the consideration and respect in which he was held in Cortesana. He was surprised though, and inclined to be angry, when on the day before he departed, Pete proposed to him that now he, Pete, was making money on so liberal a scale, his father should come with the rest of the family, to the new city, and live at his expense. His plan was to build a home for them on the property at Hidalgo bay, put the elder children at school, and let his father and mother live at ease, he footing the bills.

"My son," said the sturdy old fisherman, with pride in his son, and in indignation at the proposal, "when I get so zat I cannot support myself, I'll call on you, and not before. Zings are going all right wiz me, and I have got over a zousand dollars in ze bank, so you need not worry. Your brothers are not fitted for zis life you have undertaken, or I should let you help zem. As it is, we will stick by ze farm, which will take care of all of us. We'll not envy you your good fortune."

Pete was forced to be content with this conclusion, for he found his father deaf to argument. It must be confessed that he admired, and respected the old man all the more for his decision.

Tom bade Pete good-bye with great affection, and promised to look after the business with energy. As he said himself, it was probable that he would work harder on Pete's account than he would have done on his own. Mr. Hagan, to the wonder of all, came down to the steamer to bid Pete adieu. The irascible, but goodhearted little man pressed the boy's hand warmly at the last moment, and whispered:

"You needn't worry about this end of your business, my boy. I'll keep an eye on Tom Fisher, and see that everything goes straight. I'll manage to send him a customer now and then, too, so that you'll not lose a great deal after all, by your absence. And now, Pete," he added, "good-bye. Keep your head level, and don't get into any messes. Do as well as you can by Mr. Andrews. You'll find it will pay you big dividends in the future if you and he succeed."

The next moment the mooring lines were cast loose from the dock, and the Olympian was off for Port Townsend.

Mr. Andrews and Pete had a long confidential talk on the trip during which the former opened his plans more fully to the boy. He told him the leaders of the great smuggling conspiracy, or

ring, as he called it, were living in Victoria, Port Townsend, and Seattle, and that they not only dealt in opium, but in smuggling coolies across the border, and in wool and whiskey. He had he said, information in his possession which enabled him to identify most of the leaders, but it was necessary as they were rich and influential, to have positive—in fact, perfectly damning—evidence against them before he could move with a certainty of ensuring conviction. And this was difficult to gather as they were as clever as they were unscrupulous, and worked almost entirely through agents in the lower grades of society who did not even know—in most instances—who their employers were. In cases of detection these sub-agents had hitherto paid the penalties, which rightfully should have been imposed on the leaders. He told Pete the name of a man in Port Townsend who seemed to be at the head of the whole fraud, and Pete was amazed to recognize in him one of the best known citizens of that city. He was a lawyer by profession, and Mr. Andrews said he was forging Chinese certificates of admission to United States territory. Pete remarked with a qualm, that this man was an acquaintance of Collector Hogan, and a frequent visitor at his office.

Our hero began to feel deeply interested in the opium ring, and the more he heard of its far-reaching influence, the more he realized what a wicked shame it was that such practices should not only

exist, but be countenanced by those whose station in society should have made them the natural conservators of Law and Order. He felt, too, that it must be a demoralized community, in which such a state of affairs could exist. In fact, the more he knew and thought of it, the more he felt it to be his duty as a citizen and a decent man, to assist Mr. Andrews to the utmost of his power, and thought he:

"I will save the collector, too. I *know* he doesn't belong to the Ring!"

CHAPTER ELEVEN

WHEN Mr. Andrews and Captain Pete arrived at Port Townsend they went to the best hotel, where the government official engaged a fine suite of rooms. He said as he was posing as a capitalist, and the United States was paying the bills, he might as well carry out the character he had assumed creditably. So Pete, who shared these magnificences, lived in greater state than he had ever before known. It did not embarrass him, and he carried himself "as to the manner born."

Before the first day was over Mr. Andrews made the acquaintance of most of the prominent residents of the city, for his reputed business was soon noised abroad, and they swarmed around him like bees around a honey comb. Among his visitors was Joe Cloon the lawyer, the man whose name he had mentioned to our hero.

Joe Cloon was a very large and stout man, weighing at least two hundred and fifty pounds. He looked unwieldy at first sight, but there was a massive squareness about his build that hinted at the possession of enormous strength, and at times when occasion required it, he could move with a celerity and precision unexpected in a man of his tremendous bulk. He was about 43 years of age.

His great, fat face was smoothly shaven, and covered with freckles as though sprinkled with brick-dust from a pepper caster. His eyes were large, well-opened, and pale blue in color. They were shaded by straw-colored lashes, and his light eyebrows, and thin hair were of the same tint. He wore a constant smile, and his hearty laugh frequently wrinkled his waistcoat. He appeared to be an educated and well informed man, and had a high reputation as an able criminal lawyer. In fact, he had been successful in defending a number of cases where his clients had been charged with brutal, or heinous crimes, and was very popular with the rough and violent classes who composed the slum element of Port Townsend at that period. These fellows, it seemed, feared as well as liked him, as an incident will go to show. He was once returning at a late hour from a visit to a client in the worst quarter of the town, when he was held up by a highway robber. Joe knocked the man senseless with a terrible blow of his fist, took his revolver away, and then called a policeman, and gave him in charge. As he refused to appear against his assailant the next morning, the act added to his popularity among the outcasts.

Such a man was Cloon. His manifest ability made him of mark among the upper classes of Port Townsend. He had no family, and lived at the club which the ambitious city had recently organized, and as he had always plenty of money, and

paid his bills promptly, he was accepted as one of the leading citizens, and a credit to the town. It must not be omitted that Cloon interested himself in politics. He was equally posted on municipal, state, or national affairs though he never seemed to want office himself. But he was always present at the primaries and conventions, and it was recognized among politicians that he wielded great influence, and was a man to be conciliated and feared rather than opposed.

It happened that though Captain Pete knew Joe Cloon well, and had often seen him they had never met. Mr. Andrews introduced them to each other in the hotel the first evening they were in the city. Pete had a curious feeling of antipathy as he shook his great, hairy hand, and gazed into the big, pale eyes, to which the straw-colored lashes gave such a remarkable expression. Cloon recognized him at once, and said:

"I know you very well, Captain Pete. You are a brave fellow, and the way you did those smugglers up has often made me think of you. I am glad to see you getting along. How's your father? the brave old fisherman on Waldron island, and—your mother?" As he asked this last question, Pete instinctively felt that he knew his mother was an Indian. "I want you to come, and see me at my office, Captain Pete. When I meet a boy like you I want to make a friend of him. Mr. Andrews," he added in a half aside, "you are very fortunate to get this

young fellow to steer you around. There is no one more competent."

Captain Pete was at this moment glad of his control of feature for during this wily talk, those strange penetrating eyes of the lawyer seemed to bore deep into his heart, and search all the secrets hidden there. There was a curious power about this man that attracted and repelled our hero at the same time, but he summoned all his resolution to his aid, and managed to preserve his usual demeanor and pass the ordeal creditably. He answered modestly, but when some other gentlemen came up he slipped away, whispering to Mr. Andrews that he wanted to call on his old friends, Major and Mrs. Fisher.

"Come to my room on your return," answered Mr. Andrews.

Pete felt very serious as he walked up the hill. "That's a frightful man!" thought he, "I never saw anyone like him. It's curious, but when I met him, I felt as people say they do when they confront one of those deadly East Indian snakes for the first time. He's a bad man! I'm sure of it. And as silent and deadly, when he wants to be, as any serpent of them all. But he looks more like a rhinoceros than a snake. Now I think of it, it's queer that a man as strong as he is—he's built like a wild bull—should not be disposed to gain his ends by direct and violent means. But that's not the way Joe Cloon does things, I bet! Those eyes of his

give him away. He's like a cat watching a bird. And I suspect the cat's got cruel teeth when the birds drop into his mouth. I think I would trust a half-starved tiger before I would him. But I ain't going to trust him, though I'm afraid the poor old collector has done so. I've heard of him and Cloon drinking a good deal together. This man looks as if he could drink a barrel and never forget to take his umbrella with him when he left the room, but it's different with Mr. Hogan. What a pity the old gentleman drinks! They say he contracted the habit in the army. I don't care! He's respectable and honest if he does get full occasionally; and he's a good friend of mine,—and Grace's father, and he shall not drop into *that* cat's mouth if I can help it. So Mr. Andrews, you can bet on me to aid you spread the toils around Joe Cloon."

The end of his soliloquy brought Captain Pete to the major's residence. The Fishers were both home, and as much delighted as astonished to see him. Tom had kept them well posted as to Cortesana affairs, and they knew of the boys' brilliant success as real estate dealers. The major heard of Dope's capture, and timely rescue with deep interest and final exultation. Then Dope, who had followed Pete up the hill was brought in, and congratulations were showered upon him. The majestic animal knew he was being talked about, and conducted himself with great decorum. He sat beside his master, and whenever his name was men-

tioned he would raise his head and shoot out his great red tongue in an abortive attempt to lick Pete's face, and thank him for the peril incurred in his behalf.

"What's that P street lot worth now, Pete?" asked the major.

"I was offered two thousand dollars for it two weeks ago, but I refused to sell, sir."

"I declare, my boy," said Mrs. Fisher, "you are getting to be quite a capitalist, are you not? It fills me with envy and admiration to hear the easy way in which you mention such large sums of money. In a short time I am afraid that the little fisher boy that I made the acquaintance of in Friday Harbor, will be entirely lost in the rich and prosperous man of the world."

"Never to you and the major, and Tom, Mrs. Fisher," returned Pete, taking her hand in his and kissing it. "I shall always to you three, be in feeling that same ragged fisher lad that you took by the hand, and led from darkness into the light."

The lady drew the youth to her, and lovingly pressed her lips to his cheek:

"Well, my dear boy," she answered, "if our son is as much of a credit to us as you are, I shall be satisfied with my life. What do you think, papa?"

Major Fisher removed his eye glasses, and wiped the mist off them:

"I think," said he, "that you are both pretty near crying, and that you are two sentimental geese. Of

course Pete is all right, and we're proud of him. And it's half past ten, and he'd better go down to the hotel, or his new employer will believe he is left in the lurch."

"Gracious! I didn't think it was so late," exclaimed Pete as he sprang to his feet and hurried off.

Mr. Andrews was sitting at the writing table in his room when Pete knocked. He motioned our hero to a seat, and continued making entries in a small blank book. When he had finished, he blotted the pages carefully, and placed it in his inside vest pocket:

"That," he said, "will become a very valuable volume in time. It is my private memorandum book, and contains notes of every discovery I make that pertains to the 'great conspiracy.' But what do you think of our friend, Joe Cloon, Captain Pete?"

Pete thought a great deal, but he was not going to be previous, and tell it all before he knew something of Mr. Andrews' opinion. So he said it was pretty difficult to 'reckon a man up' at such a short interview as he had had with Mr. Cloon. Mr. Andrews flashed a rapid glance at our hero as he pledged himself to this non-committal statement. Then he said:

"Oh! you think so, do you? No doubt you are right. If I am not mistaken, it will take a great many interviews, and long ones at that to 'reckon

up' Joe Cloon. Pete, that is a singularly able villain. I believe he is the man who has organized the whole ring, and not content with the profits arising from that he is operating in forged Chinese certificates on the side, on his own private account. Do you know that this man who is supposed to be dependent on his law practice for a living, has a deposit account of over two hundred thousand dollars in a bank in Seattle, and as much more in different banks in Portland?"

"Whew!" exclaimed Pete, opening his eyes to their fullest extent, "you don't say so! How on earth did you find it out?"

"Oh! By ways peculiar to the service I am in," returned he. "I can't explain, but you may depend on it for a fact. Our friend Cloon is a very downy bird indeed, but I think we shall finally succeed in 'reckoning him up,' after all. It's a pity he's on the wrong side of the fence. If he only exerted his powers in legitimate fields he might have anything in the world he wanted, and would be a tremendous force on the side of law and order. His is a case of curiously misdirected energy and ability."

"Yes," said Pete, "he's a man of baleful power."

"What," remarked Mr. Andrews with a smile, "you 'reckoned him up' some too, did you, in spite of the shortness of the interview."

Pete laughed, and acknowledged that Cloon had impressed him as an extraordinarily able and evil man.

"And that's precisely what he is," agreed Mr. Andrews, "but for all that Pete, his career is going to be a short one. If I can convict him I shall strike the fountain head, and I feel confident that if his directing brain were withdrawn the ring would drop to pieces. This man I believe holds all the strings in his own strong hands, and I do not think he has a single confidant. Each of his accomplices knows one or more of the ramifications of the conspiracy, but none but *he* knows them *all*. Thus, if anything should happen to him, the whole house would tumble down."

"He looks very healthy," observed Pete.

"Oh! I don't think he's apt to drop off by natural means," answered Mr. Andrews, smiling.

"We can't poison him, can we?" continued Pete dubiously.

"No unfortunately, we can't."

Pete had been following out a train of thought in his head, and the last two remarks had dropped from him as he made each point mentally. Now he reached his conclusion, and he looked up with animation:

"I tell you what, Mr. Andrews! Let's kidnap him, and take him off to some place where he cannot escape, or be found. Then while he's away his absence will paralyze his tools, and they will be thrown into such confusion that they can easily be caught."

Mr. Andrews did not smile this time. He failed

to answer at once, and seemed to be reflecting deeply. After a pause he spoke:

"Do you know Pete, that's rather a good idea of yours, altho' it's a somewhat lawless proceeding for me to engage in. However, we must fight fire with flame sometimes. It's possible it may come to that. But wait a while. There's something you don't know yet. This man Joe Cloon came here suddenly four years ago. He was entirely unknown at the time of his appearance, and brought no letters of introduction. Since then no one has ever been able to find out any particulars of his past life. Although from his conversation one can see that he has, at one time or other, been in all the great cities of the Union, it is not known that he was a resident anywhere. Now, my notion is that Joe Cloon couldn't have lived in any place long without making his mark, and a very black one. And so I think he is here under an assumed name. I have got the police authorities at work all over the United States hunting up a man of his peculiar description. If he has committed an overt act against the law in some other locality, and I find it out, don't you see I'll have him on the hip? Then we can do the kidnapping act under the sanction of the law, and we'll knock Mr. Cloon's house of cards all to flinders."

"By Jupiter!" Pete gasped exultantly, as he listened to this speech from his chief, "you're all right, Mr. Andrews!"

The official smiled quietly, and concluded:

“Don’t rejoice too soon, Pete. Every egg that is put in the nest is not hatched out, but we’ll sit on this one a while. Now, good night.”

CHAPTER TWELVE

CAPTAIN PETE seized the opportunity in the morning when he had an hour to spare, and made a call on Collector Hogan. He had inquired about his old friend the night before, and the major had told him the collector was failing rapidly. He had had a severe attack of la grippe during the past winter, and that terrible disease had taken a firm hold of his enfeebled frame so that now though he had recovered in a measure, his constitution seemed unable to throw off the lingering effects. And the major added, "he appeared to have lost his former vigorous hold on business affairs," and the department was not running so well in consequence.

Pete had thought deeply over the situation. He was worried, and felt that he must do something to brace the old man up. What that something was to be, however, he could not determine. It was manifestly dishonorable to disclose to him the mission on which Mr. Andrews was employed, and he could not think of any other way of getting into the collector's confidence to discover how far he was involved without telling him why he wanted to know about his affairs. He finally determined to trust to fortune for an opening.

The magnificent stone building erected by the

National government for the Port Townsend custom house was now complete, and Pete made his way to it at half past ten. He found that the collector was not in his office, and they told him that the chief seldom made his appearance nowadays before the afternoon. Our hero then went to the Hogan residence. Mrs. Hogan met him in the parlor and greeted him warmly. She was looking worn, and her face had become saddened since Pete saw her last. But she was kindness itself, and did her utmost to make him feel at home.

"I have always believed," she said, "that you were one of our true friends. And by the bye, do you remember Gracie, who has been in boarding school in New York? She will finish her course in three weeks, and come back to us."

Did he remember Gracie! He was glad the Venetian blind was closed, for with all his command of feature, the surge of feeling that swept over him at the unexpected news showed plainly in his face. But he steadied his voice, tho' he knew its quality had changed as he said:

"Yes, I remember her well. Did she not intend to remain longer?"

"Why yes, but she doesn't seem to be entirely happy in New York. And she would be such a comfort home now we are all in the dumps. Besides Mr. Hogan is straitened for money, so we have decided to allow her to return. She is perfectly delighted at the prospect, judging from her

letters, and that reminds me of what I was going to say when I began speaking of her. The child seems to remember you well. She asks after you frequently, and follows your fortunes with much interest. She wrote in her last that a Miss McIntyre, who used to be her room mate, but left school last year, met you when on a yachting party at Hidalgo."

If Mrs. Hogan had the slightest idea that she was riveting the intangible chain that connected her daughter's heart with the thumping organ beating in Captain Pete's bosom, it is probable she would have been more cautious in her disclosures. But she evidently regarded Grace as a mere child, and nothing was further from her thoughts than the possibility that the manly stripling before her was burning with ardor, and willing to accomplish anything in the world to possess the affections of that "child."

At this point in the conversation Mr. Hogan made his appearance. Pete could have forgiven him if he had deferred his coming, for it was very delightful to talk, or rather hear about Grace, but his heart softened as he noted the signs of wear and tear on the old man. The bluff and hearty veteran of three years ago had seemingly become a chronic invalid. His hair, which had been a stubborn iron-gray when Pete knew him, had faded to pure white, and there were many and deep lines in his worn face. Even his manner, which had formerly been

abrupt and even peremptory, was softened until it was deprecatory. The change was deeply pathetic, and yet the young man thought as he looked at the noble brow and sweet mouth, it was a grand wreck.

"My boy, my boy," said the collector, and there was a trembling vibration in his voice as he wrung Pete's hand. "It's good for my old eyes to see you. I was almost afraid you were forgetting me now that you are becoming prosperous, and I am going down hill." Here he interrupted himself, and threw a glance at Mrs. Hogan, on whose face the lines of care had suddenly deepened. "I mean I am beginning to feel my age, and business worries me more than it used to. But Pete," here his face brightened up visibly, "come and sit beside me, and tell me all about your successes."

"Father," said Mrs. Hogan, "I must go out, so I will leave you here to have a nice long talk with Captain Pete."

When she left the room the collector made Pete begin at the time he had left Port Townsend, and relate everything that had occurred, in detail. He listened with absorbed interest, and seemed to forget his cares as he followed our hero's story. The Dope incident impressed him, and at Jack Hardy's name he broke in upon the narrative by saying:

"Jack Hardy! Why, that must be the man who was tried here for murdering his chum when they were out prospecting. I remember the case perfectly. It was morally sure he had killed the man.

The victim was found in their shack shot in the back, but Joe Cloon defended him, and got him off. He is now suspected of acting as go-between to a gang of smugglers who are said to be operating largely between Victoria and Seattle. So he's in jail! Well, I hope they'll hold him. When is his trial set?"

"The next term of Superior Court," answered Pete, "before Judge Wine of Whatcom."

"Well, that will be in about ten days, then."

"I hope not," said Pete, "for I suppose I'll be summoned as a witness, and it may interfere with my trip with Mr. Andrews."

"Well," said the collector, "you'll have to go. I recollect clearly now. Court convenes on the fourteenth."

"Well," said Pete, unthinkingly, "I shouldn't wonder if Joe Cloon went down there to defend Hardy. But he'll have a job to get him off this time, for we caught them in the act when they actually had the rope around Dope's neck ready to hang the poor fellow."

Pete noticed that the bright and cheerful look faded from the collector's face when Cloon's name was mentiond. Also when he spoke of Hardy's present connection with a band of smugglers as a go-between—which the boy knew meant the connecting link between those who brought the opium from British Columbia, and the purchasers in the United States—the young detective felt at once

that he had in all probability struck a clew that might be valuable to Mr. Andrews. Mr. Hogan however, broke the pause that had followed Pete's last remark, by saying abruptly:

"What makes you think Joe Cloon will go down to defend Jack Hardy?"

This sudden question rather posed Pete, and he did not know what to reply. Of course he had in his own mind the statement of Mr. Andrews that Cloon was the head of the great opium conspiracy, and it was the suspicion that Hardy might be one of his tools, that had led him to make the thoughtless remark. He did not answer immediately, and the collector repeated the question, with an insistence that showed he had some definite reason in wanting to know:

"Why do you think Cloon will go? And what do you know about him, anyhow?"

A sudden resolution came to Pete, and he looked the old man squarely in the eye.

"I don't know anything about him," he said, determined to give his friend a warning at all hazards, "but I suspect him to be a bad man."

"Well, he stands well here," remarked the collector, as if he spoke in defense of the absent.

"I know he does," replied Pete, "but, Mr. Hogan, I feel a curious and inexplicable sensation when I am talking to that man that makes me distrust him. There is something about him that is vile, and I shudder at the touch of his hand."

"You have very keen intuitions, Pete," said the old man slowly, "I know that. But it doesn't seem like you to trust to them as you seem to do in this case. Are you sure you don't *know* anything about Joe Cloon that confirms you in this feeling of repulsion?"

The chief of the customs was certainly very much in earnest, and Pete could not help reflecting that it looked as if he—the collector—knew something, and was trying to find out if Pete had discovered it. He answered sturdily, however:

"I am sure he is a bad man, and unworthy to associate with anybody who is honest, although I cannot tell you how I know."

This appeared to satisfy Mr. Hogan, although of course, he could not know that our young hero's last statement was misleading, and intended to convey the idea that the distrust was instinctive, when it was really founded on a knowledge of facts.

"Well," he concluded, "perhaps you are right, Pete, and it would be best for us to not have much to do with him."

"I wouldn't if I were you, sir," returned our hero, rather meaningly.

The collector shrunk a little from Pete's eyes, and answered:

"I don't intend to, Pete, if I can avoid it."

The boy returned to the hotel with plenty to occupy his mind. In the first place, the information

that Grace was coming home again filled his soul with joy. That she remembered him, and had been interested in his career did not surprise him. He had ever since that last honest glance of her blue eyes on the day they had parted, felt sure there was a bond between them which neither could break without the other being made aware of it; and as his thoughts dwelt on her, so to some degree must hers on him.

Next in his mind was the probable connection between Joe Cloon and Jack Hardy. He saw at once that such an indomitable, and unscrupulous knave would be an invaluable instrument to a man like the conspirator, and that the very qualities which made him so dangerous to society would fit him to a greater degree of usefulness in the hands of the abler scoundrel.

"By George!" he thought, "I wonder if Jack don't know some of Cloon's secrets. If he does, the lawyer will *have* to defend him, or Jack will turn on the thumbscrew."

Pete sought his chief and found him in his bedroom, thoughtfully turning over the leaves of the little blank book mentioned before. The lad opened up his budget, and found an eager listener.

"Good for you, Pete," said the government official, "this is something fresh, and I am very much mistaken if it does not lead in the direction you suspect. I wish we had known it before we left

Cortesana. Who can you trust to be close-mouthed and do exactly as you tell him, down there?"

"Tom Fisher," replied Pete promptly.

"Won't he inform his father, and make him suspicious of us?"

"Not if I say it is a secret."

"Then you sit down and write him a letter. Tell him to have Jack Hardy watched as a cat would a mouse. And if he sends any letters to any one, especially to Joe Cloon, have him copy the letters and send the copies to their destinations, and forward the originals to you by registered mail. Tell him to use money unsparingly to effect these purposes, and you will make it good. Don't mention me in the matter at all, of course, but let him think it is all your concern in convicting Hardy of his crime against the dog. I will bear all the expenses. Wait! I'll dictate the letter while you write it."

Pete wrote a letter which contained all the points mentioned above. Then as the boat carrying the mail was about to leave, he took it on board, and posted it there.

"Suppose we take a walk along the shore as far as the light house," suggested Mr. Andrews on his return. "I want to see the city from that side, and it will do us no harm to stretch our legs."

"All right, sir," agreed Pete.

They followed Water street down to the end, and

then took the beach the rest of the way. On this side of town the promontory on which the city is built is so precipitous that it is a sheer fall from the top to the bottom. There is no approach from this side, or at least there was none at the time of which we are speaking, although the residence portion of the town is situated on the plateau above. The walk was a familiar one to Pete, who had often been here with Tom Fisher. Mr. Andrews, as our hero had already found out was a wonderfully observant man, and scrutinized the face of the cliff microscopically as they walked along. Suddenly he interrupted himself in some unimportant observation by asking:

"Pete, do you see that clump of cedar about half way up the face of the cliff?"

Pete was about to stop and gaze up, but Andrews said:

"Don't stop, for some one may be watching you. Just look as if you saw it casually. I just noticed a man's head between those branches and I'm puzzled to know how he got there without flying, for there's no trail up or down. In this detective business I have learned that nothing is unimportant, and it seems to me that is a remarkably good hiding place. So we won't let that fellow know we've spotted him."

"I'd like to see the house on the upland whose back yard comes out on the cliff above that clump," remarked Pete.

"A good idea, and when we come back the tide will be down so we can walk farther out, and perhaps we will be able to see it. At any rate, a trip along the top of the cliff will inform us."

"That's a curious place," said Pete, "I wonder I never noticed it before. Did you observe that a big hollow appeared to be scooped out of the bank there, so that the cedar trees are actually under its brow?"

"Yes," returned Mr. Andrews suggestively, "it would be a good place for smugglers to use as a *cache* if there were any private means of getting to and from it."

"They would need a subterranean passage, or they might come down with a rope from the top, I suppose."

"Hardly that. You see if a rope hung straight it would come ten feet from the trees."

"Well," said Pete, whose curiosity was wrought up to the highest pitch, "I'm going to try and find out before this night is over."

"Do!" answered Mr. Andrews. "I confess to being inquisitive myself. But be careful, I shouldn't wonder if there were danger in it. Secrecy and outlawry go together."

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

THAT evening Captain Pete and Dope took a stroll along the cliff edge of the upper town. On the return from the light house, they had been able to discover a small, white building on the brink of the cliff above the clump of cedars which had so excited their curiosity. There was a larger residence nearby that served to locate the spot, and so he was able to lay a pretty straight course to the suspected structure. A short walk brought him to the end or rather to the starting point of Elm street, and he found that the cottage—the one whose back yard abutted on the cliff above the mysterious inhabited clump of trees—was on the corner, thus having a frontage on Spruce as well as Elm street. It was a small square structure, built after the English colonial pattern, and containing four rooms. But what particularly interested him as he strolled past, was the fact that in the rear was a small out building, resembling a wood shed, but closed on all four sides. He could not understand the reason of this building—assuming it to be an innocent and ordinary outhouse—being placed at the furthest possible point from the house, which was built on the front of the lot at the ordinary distance from the sidewalk. This wood shed, and not the dwelling

was the building he and Mr. Andrews had remarked from the sea level that afternoon.

The house showed signs of being inhabited, for the windows all contained curtains, or rather shades, which however, were closely drawn as if the occupants were absent. It was now about half an hour before night fall, and it seemed to Pete rather noteworthy that all the family—if it were a family that inhabited the mansion—should be away from home. Pete noted particularly a thick bunch of whortleberry bushes which sprung from the stump of a felled fir tree close to the edge of the cliff in the middle of the street—which like many other highways in the new city—was still ungraded. This was not thirty yards from the out building in the yard. He resolved that he would go, and report progress to Mr. Andrews, and later, when darkness came on ambush himself in the whortleberry cover, and watch for developments. For reasoned he:

“That fellow that Mr. Andrews saw among the cedars must have been there all day, and he’ll probably be tired of his seclusion, and want to come out to-night. As he can’t get to the beach without breaking his neck—unless he has a pair of wings, which isn’t probable—it’s to be expected he’ll come up this way. And I believe that outhouse is going to play a part in the matter. So that’s what I want to keep an eye on. Come, Dope, let’s go, and report.”

The mastiff gave a solemn wag of assent, and followed his master down the street in his usual manner when he felt the expedition to be of a business nature. That is, he stalked silently behind Pete, and so closely that every time our hero's knee was straightened Dope's faithful nose touched it and assured him of the dog's presence at his post, and readiness for action.

Mr. Andrews approved of Pete's night reconnoissance, and advised him to carry his "gun" in case of emergency. His counsel was good the boy thought, and he took it. By ten o'clock he had with Dope, placed himself in ambush. He found that during his absence the cottage had become tenanted, for the room at the back ordinarily used as a kitchen was illumined and smoke and sparks issued from the chimney in such a quantity as to indicate a brisk fire within.

Pete watched silently. After a while the kitchen window was thrown open, and a man came and stood in the aperture for a moment. Owing to the bright light of a lamp in the interior of the room the boy could discern him distinctly from his hiding place. He was a sturdy-looking fellow attired in rough corduroy trousers and a blue woolen shirt. The latter was open at the neck and the sleeves rolled back showing a pair of muscular arms. An appetizing whiff came from within, denoting that a meal was being prepared.

It was now considerably after eleven o'clock, and

an uneasy whimper from Dope interrupted Pete's cogitations and drew his attention to the fact that somebody was approaching along Spruce street. The municipal authorities had provided no street lamps for that part of town. The new comer was several blocks distant, and only quick ears like those of Dope and his master could have distinguished the sound of the footsteps which were those of a heavy, but alert, and vigorous man. They drew nearer, and nearer, striking sharply on the board sidewalk.

"Whick-whack! whick-whack!"

Pete's heart beat in unison with them, and finally—and our hero felt that he had almost anticipated it—the burly form of Joe Cloon emerged from the obscurity and became palpable before Pete's eyes. He paused at the gate of the cottage—the boy knew he would—gazed around keenly, and listened intently for a moment. Then he passed in and following the path to the back with a certainty that denoted acquaintance, he entered through the kitchen door without knocking and sharply closed it after him. Through the side window—the shade of which was fortunately slightly raised—Pete saw him throw his heavy form carelessly in a chair, while the blue-shirted man stood respectfully before him as if being interrogated. A few terse questions and answers seemed to give Cloon the information he sought, and then he spoke earnestly and briefly. At the conclusion, and but five

minutes after he had entered he emerged, and standing a moment on the porch Pete heard him say in tones of authority:

"Not one moment before two! Send him down to me at once. Have this house dark, and the fire out by midnight."

Then he walked around to the front of the building and passed out. Pete debated in his mind as to whether he should follow and decided that it would serve no useful purpose, for besides being a hazardous errand it was more than probable that the chief of the smugglers would go straight to his home.

"But," thought our young detective, "what did his instructions to Blue Shirt mean? *What* must not be done a moment before two? Does that refer to getting the man out of the clump of cedars on the face of the cliff? That would fit in all right with 'send him at once.' I guess that's it. I'd like to be present at their interview, for I've an idea it would be interesting to Mr. Andrews. I wonder who 'Blue Shirt' is? I must try and find out tomorrow. One of Joe Cloon's clients, I suppose. From the way the lawyer talked to him I should imagine he owned him, body and soul. Humph! I wouldn't like Joe Cloon to own my soul! Well, I think that will be all until two o'clock comes."

In this idea he made himself as comfortable as he could, and with his hand on Dope's neck, lay at ease. The hours dragged with halting footsteps, and no

one enlivened the lonely locality by passing—not even a policeman interrupting his solitary watch. The light had long since been extinguished in the cottage, and it was getting on towards two o'clock. Now the sound of an opening door made Dope prick up his ears, and brought Pete to his feet. The skies had become clear, and the stars shone more brightly than in the early watches of the night. The lad, with his acute vision could plainly see "Blue Shirt" with a glowing pipe in his mouth, come out of the kitchen and follow the path straight down the middle of the lot to the out building. He took a key from his pocket, unlocked the door, threw it open, and passed inside. Pete found he could not follow his motions as closely as he wished, and signing to the mastiff to remain where he was, he cautiously crept to the shadow of the board fence where he was only about thirty feet from the open door through which "Blue Shirt" had disappeared. Pete heard him fumbling about, and then there was a creaking as if a tightly fitting door had been opened on the opposite or seaward of the building. When Pete heard this sound without being able from his present position to see what caused it, his desire for information on the subject became uncontrollable. He crouched in the shadow, and swiftly crawled along the fence on the outside until he reached the end at the break of the cliff. Here he had a close view of the back of the shed.

Sure enough the creaking was accounted for. The upper part of the wall, or skin of the structure opened outwards on a pair of hinges, not vertically, as might have been expected, but horizontally. "Blue Shirt" was seen leaning over the opening. He reached out his hand as if grasping something which the light was too dim to allow even Pete's sharp eyes to see. In a moment he evidently clutched what he had been reaching for, and gave a couple of quick jerks. Pete concluded there must have been a very fine line passing into the hollow gulf below which served as a means of communication between any person in the cedar clump, and those desiring to reach them from above.

In a moment the answering signal apparently came, for "Blue Shirt" gave some more jerks which seemed to Pete to be preconcerted. Then he stepped back, and shortly our hero saw a strong spar with a block and tackle made fast to the end of it, passed out through the open space. This was evidently firmly secured by some contrivance within the building. The next performance on the programme was for "Blue Shirt" to overhaul the rope until it passed out of sight in the dark void. Pete recalled the signalling cord, and made up his mind that it was attached to this tackle so that the man below could haul it in to him when the lower block was opposite his place of concealment. Otherwise it would, as Andrews had observed in the afternoon, hang far out of reach from the trees.

At any rate, everything seemed to go smoothly for directly "Blue Shirt" stopped overhauling, and retired into the building again. Then came a rattle of the block, apparently caused by a shake being given to the tackle from below. The ropes became taut, and the faint screek of the shives was heard as they revolved. "Blue Shirt" was hoisting a friend to the upper world.

"Skreek, skreek, skreek, skreek."

Slowly, and surely the purchase brought the two blocks together. Pete, in his eagerness raised himself, and peered over the fence. Then the body of a man came in view. He was sitting in a kind of "boatswain's chair" such as is used by sailors when they slush the masts. Skreek, skreek, higher and higher, until he was on a level with the top of the cliff, and then with the open door of the out house.

"Hold up, Ben!" said the occupant of the "chair."

"Aye, aye, Sam," answered Ben, or "Blue Shirt." He made fast the fall of the tackle on which he was "bowsing," and came to the window.

"Now toss me the end of a rope, and haul me in," said Sam.

Ben tossed, and in an instant Sam, who had caught it, was drawn in until he slipped out of the chair on the inside of the house.

"Everything all right?" Captain Pete heard him say to his companion.

"Yes," responded Ben, "all o. k., but let's get this spar in, and the door closed. No need of running

chances. The boss was up to-night, and he wants you to go right down to see him at the old place."

"That suits me," said Sam, "I'm mighty glad to get out of the cave. I tell you, twenty-four hours down there is all a man wants."

"I should think so! It wouldn't suit me. Not enough room to turn around in. Besides, it must be pretty well filled with goods."

"Yes, there's enough dope, and whiskey there to give us both a good stake if we turned informers."

Ben grunted. By this time the house was restored to its usual appearance and they came out, locking the door carefully behind them. As they made their way to the house Pete had the opportunity to see this man who had emerged from the bowels of the earth. He was a rather slender, good-looking fellow of middle height, and dressed with much more regard to appearances than Ben. In fact he wore a white shirt and derby hat, and did not at all fill our hero's previous conception of a smuggler.

He only remained long enough in the house to eat. Pete had made up his mind to follow him, and see where the rendezvous with Cloon took place. So when he bade a careless adieu to "Blue Shirt" and passed down the street, the boy and the dog glided after stealthy as panthers, and just far enough behind to run no risk of being discovered. Sam's course soon led him to the more populous part of town but at that time of night or rather

morning, there was no danger of being seen; and not even a policeman interrupted the slim, swift figure in front, or the two shadowy forms that glided in pursuit. At last Sam came to the steps that led to the lower town, and flitted rapidly down them coming out on the little square in front of the Leader office. After an interval Pete and Dope followed and when they reached terra firma, found that the smuggler had disappeared. Water street was only a block below and running down swiftly, the boy had the satisfaction of seeing Sam pass out of sight through the entrance of a large office building.

Pete stopped. He knew that Cloon rented two adjoining rooms on the second floor of that building. One of these rooms he utilized as an office, and the other he slept in, getting his meals at the club.

The chase was ended, and the wild cat treed.

"Now what!" thought Pete. "Shall I stay here, and see if he comes out again, or shall I go home? I guess there's no chance of my learning any more anyhow, and what I have found out to-night is important enough to earn me six months' salary from the government. I guess I'll get to the hotel, and go to bed. I can find my friends "Blue Shirt" and Joe Cloon any time I want them. As for this fellow Sam, I'll take a quiet squint at the boats tomorrow, and see if he goes out. I've a notion he's

a pretty confidential man, and that the Boss is going to send him on a mission somewhere."

The night clerk at the hotel, who probably thought that our hero had been out on a spree, as was the custom of many prosperous young men in the Sound country in those days, tried to look as if he did not recognize him, and Pete got his key, and ran lightly up the stairs. He was about entering his own room when Mr. Andrews' door opened, and he came suddenly out:

"Come in here, Captain Pete," said he.

"I thought you were at home," explained Mr. Brown. "I was in your office and you have not been in for some time. Sit down and tell me all the news."

Captain Peck did so, and the other listened until he reached the end of his story without interrupting him, although his attitude and the expression of his face showed his interest.

"Well," he said finally, "we're getting on. This is entirely unexpected, and a great slice of good luck. You appear to have thoroughly stumbled on one of their main caches. You see Joe Cloon is no petty tradesman. He manages affairs like a wholesale merchant. He has a large stock of goods on hand to deal with. It is more than likely that the product of a mysterious clump of cedars. What astonishing business the fellow displays! He's carrying his trade literally under the noses of the custom officers. And yet it's good policy, for who in this world would ever dream of the possibility of such an arrangement in the cave for communicating with the shore, for of course the incoming goods

are landed on the beach and hoisted up. Ben, or "Blue Shirt" as you call him, is evidently the guard on duty, and I don't suppose the approaches to the cave are unwatched a moment day or night. What marvellous luck for us to have fallen upon it in this way!"

"It seems to me," said Pete, who had been thinking while the other was talking, "that the strongest point in favor of the success of the smugglers is the position Joe Cloon himself holds in society. You see, sir, he knows everybody, is wholly unsuspected, and takes advantage of his standing to gather up every item of such news as is apt to affect his interests. Why, Mr. Andrews, he is as much at home in the custom house as one of the employees."

"Yes, I know that he hears everything that goes on there, and at one time he was very intimate with Collector Hogan though they have not been together so much of late."

"No, I'm sure it isn't so any longer," replied Pete, determined to put in a good word for Grace's father. "Collector Hogan as good as distrusts him now. He told me so to-day."

Mr. Andrews regarded the earnest lad curiously and intently. Then he exclaimed:

"I hope you have not been talking too freely! Secrecy is of the utmost importance. An incautious word might wreck my plans."

"No, sir. You may trust my discretion abso-

lutely. The subject came up naturally, and the collector had no suspicion of what we know. I think his dislike to Cloon has grown out of the essential antipathy between Good and Evil."

"You appear to be a very warm friend of the collector, Pete," observed Andrews meditatively.

"Yes, sir, I am. I believe him to be a thoroughly upright man, who may have been weak or careless, but never under any circumstances dishonest."

"Well, he has many good points, I know," concluded the official, "and you may be right. Time will show. But now, good night! We must be at the pier when the nine o'clock boat leaves."

"Good night, sir."

And Pete went to his bed, feeling he had removed some of the distrust with which his chief regarded the collector, and happy in the thought.

When the Island Belle coming through from Victoria, B. C. on its way to Seattle stopped at Port Townsend the next morning, the dock was black with the number of people gathered to greet it. Among the spectators were Mr. Andrews and Captain Pete. They secured a position near the gangplank, and looked around. In a moment Andrews nudged Pete, and he saw that Cloon had just come on the dock. The next instant Pete recognized Sam in the person of a nattily dressed young fellow carrying a valise that resembled the outfit of a commercial traveller, or drummer. He was in the line to the ticket office, and Pete elbowed

his way to a point near enough to hear him ask for a stop-over ticket to Seattle. Sam's get-up was irreproachable, and our hero read on his bag, the words S. Aylward, and observed that the card of a well known Portland business house was tacked below it. In the clear light of the sun, Pete noted that Sam's face was distinctly Jewish in character, and that he was a clever, tho' rather reckless looking fellow. He was togged up to the nines this morning, and a vivid necktie and abundance of flashy jewelry made him a noticeable figure. After procuring his ticket he looked around, exchanging an almost imperceptible glance with Cloon, and made his way in the direction of the steamer. Pete had by this time returned to Andrews and pointed Sam out to him, so they both had a good opportunity to observe him as he approached.

On the way back to the hotel Andrews said he had no doubt that Aylward was really an employee of Blank and Company, the Portland house, and that he thought it more than probable he was at the present time under instructions from Cloon to carry a message to Hardy. Hence the stop-over ticket.

That day's mail brought Pete a letter from Tom Fisher, as well as an official notification that he was expected to appear in Cortesana at the sitting of the Superior Court as a witness in the case of the State versus Jack Hardy, et al. Tom's letter was terse, and we will give it in full:

CORTESANA, SKAGIT COUNTY, WASH., AUG. 3RD.
Dear Pete,

Your long letter of instructions in regard to Jack Hardy came to hand all right. What the deuce do you take me for, an amateur detective? Well, I tried my best to do what you wanted, for I suppose you have some reason for it, tho' it looks a good deal like nonsense to me. So I went to Bill, our prize-fighting constable, and got him to make me solid with the jailer who has Hardy and the others in custody. I have got a bill against you so far for about seven dollars worth of whiskey administered to that functionary at odd intervals whenever I could catch him near, and steer him into a gin mill. I am afraid my own character is suffering because of the company I keep and the places I have been obliged to frequent in order to win over the turnkey. But I have done it and to prove what I say, here is a letter (enclosed) which Hardy has written to his lawyer, old Joe Cloon, of Port Townsend. You remember him, don't you? The missive doesn't seem to me to be of any particular importance, except as a sample of diction and handwriting, but as you wanted it, here it is. I had my turnkey friend copy it in his own hand—which is equally villainous, and the copy was forwarded to its destination.

Business in general is very good, and I have made a number of sales since your departure. Hagan sees a good deal of me now, and by the way,

I believe he thought I had taken to drink since I have been trotting around with the turnkey. He has tried to smell my breath several times, but as my potations never consist of anything stronger than mineral water, or at the worst, lemonade, I fancy he is regaining his confidence in me. At any rate, he sent me over a customer yesterday. I hear you have got to come back to the term of court on the 14th, so good-bye until then.

Yours as ever,

TOM FISHER, THE SHADOW DETECTIVE.

This characteristic letter made Pete and Mr. Andrews smile and they turned to the enclosure, Jack Hardy's epistle to Cloon, without losing a minute. As Tom had hinted the caligraphy and style were labored, to say the least. It read as follows:

Onured Sur, an' Boss,

this is To infome You that i Am in gail An' want fer to git out i want You To come Hear, an' Look out fer me. The trile is set the 15 of septeMber befoar jugg Wine. i will tel You what foR wen you Cum.

respeckfully

JACK HARDY.

Poscrip.

YouDe BeteR not fAle me. You kno Why.

JACK.

"This 'Poscrip' is very significant," remarked Andrews, with a smile. "I think Cloon will go down, and attend to him."

Pete assented thoughtfully and then added that he hoped his enforced attendance at the sitting of the court as a witness would not inconvenience Mr. Andrews.

"Not at all," replied the latter; "in fact, it will be precisely the place in which you will be needed to look after Cloon and Hardy."

"Shall you come down too, sir?"

"No, I think I shall remain here for the present."

Captain Pete knew that Andrews was working in a number of ways that he did not consider it necessary to confide in him at the present time. He was beginning to know his chief pretty well, and he saw by his manner during the next few days that his investigation was progressing satisfactorily.

Having plenty of time on his hands, Pete took advantage of the fact to see a great deal of Major and Mrs. Fisher, and the collector, in the few days remaining before he had to attend the trial at Cortesana. He also paid a visit to Mr. Brown, his former landlord, and looked over his things, which he had stored there. As it did not seem likely that he would soon go to housekeeping again he made a gift of most of his furniture to his little friend Murph, who had just built a small house on a lot he had purchased on the outskirts of the city. The

little chap—now by the way a sturdy boy—had earned and saved enough to buy the new home for his mother and himself, and was in a fair way to be comfortable. He worked in Bernstein's grocery store, and his salary was more than sufficient for their modest needs.

Joe Cloon took a great deal of notice of Mr. Andrews and our hero during this period. In response to his repeated invitations Pete finally called upon him in his office. The visit was made against his inclination, and rather for the purpose of keeping the lawyer from thinking he was desirous of avoiding him than any other reason. On this occasion, which took place some days after the receipt of the letter, and enclosure from Tom Fisher, the smuggler was all cordiality to our hero:

"Why, Captain Pete," said he, "this is a distinguished honor, and I am delighted to see you here. How is our mutual friend the collector? I have not seen much of him lately, and I hear his health is failing. You and he are great 'tillicums,' aren't you? Yes, I thought so. Well, he's a fine old gentleman."

The conversation was carried on in this one-sided way for some time, Pete being too ill at ease to talk freely, when suddenly Cloon broke in upon himself and continued as if it had just occurred to him:

"And by the way, Captain Pete, I find I am engaged to argue a case in which you are interested.

It appears that the friends of that poor fellow Jack Hardy, who had some foolish trouble with that magnificent mastiff of yours when he was trying to steal it, have raised a hundred dollars and sent for me to defend him. I saved his bacon once before, and the fellow has unlimited faith in me. I presume I shall have to go. A hundred dollars is a large sum of money, and I cannot afford to lose it."

Pete thought of the splendid balances in the Seattle and Portland banks in Cloon's name and tried to look sympathetic, but his allusion to the offense as one of simple dog stealing made him abandon his reticence.

"He was not only trying to steal Dope, but to hang him, sir! And he's a cowardly and malicious brute."

"Tut, tut," said Cloon, smiling, "don't get angry. That is the charge, I know, but it's all nonsense. I have heard all the facts in the case—how you bullied him into eating that threatening letter that Dewitt wrote, among other things. And really Captain Pete, you are hasty and greatly mistaken, as hot-headed people are apt to be."

Pete flushed crimson, and wondered how the lawyer had contrived to get such definite information. It was evident that he had been working up the case to some purpose. But our hero very wisely made up his mind that it would do no good for him to discuss the circumstances with an opponent so keen as Cloon. So he said:

"Every one is liable to make mistakes, sir, and I suppose I among the rest."

Joe looked at him a moment, and then smiled approvingly. His voice had a genuine ring as he answered:

"Upon my word, Captain Pete, you are a shrewd youngster. I could make good use of a young fellow like you."

This remark, and the tone in which it was uttered, gave Pete a mental shock that he could scarcely help showing. What did it mean? Had Cloon really taken a fancy to him, and was he on the point of making him overtures to join the ring of smugglers of which he was the head? The supposition was very flattering, at any rate. So he answered :

"You are very flattering, Mr. Cloon, but I don't think I'd make a very good lawyer's clerk."

All this time Cloon's eyes had held Pete so firmly that he hardly dared think for fear of being found out, but the boy was now thoroughly aroused, and we have seen before that he had extraordinary self command and tact upon occasion. He gazed into the lawyer's eyes with serene innocence as he made the last remark—which he hoped would lead him to commit himself. For a moment the big man's face warmed up, and his eyes shot living streams of intelligence into Pete's black ones.

Then our hero could see the life and animation called back into the brain from which it had ema-

nated, much as if a light were turned down, and he knew that he would not entrap the wily smuggler on that occasion. Cloon turned his face toward the window, and observed negligently:

"Do you not really? Now I had a notion that you would. And perhaps you would make a better lawyer, than a lawyer's clerk. Pete, that's a good idea! Why don't you read law? You may do so here in my office, and have the use of my library, which is as good a one as there is in the state."

"Many thanks, Mr. Cloon. I'll take the matter into consideration, and perhaps later on I may accept your kind offer." He added to himself as he took leave, "and I'd as soon study in a boa constrictor's cage as in your office."

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

“**Y**ES, sir,” said Pete afterwards, in relating the circumstances of the interview with Cloon to his chief. “I believe the man was on the very point of making me a proposal to cast in my lot with him.”

“Perhaps, Pete,” replied Mr. Andrews. “He has been paying a great deal of attention to you lately, and it’s possible that he has made up his mind that you would make a good smuggler. But he’s very acute and suspicious and it may have been a blind, although I cannot imagine how he should have the slightest idea that you are ‘on’ to him. We must go slow. With a man of his calibre one cannot be too careful. However, I am closing him in. I begin to have an idea that he is making preparations for a grand coup. At any rate, he is working now, although of course it is all under cover, with extraordinary energy. I have a notion he is getting ready to make one last tremendous haul, and then pull up his tent stakes and get out. I have discovered that Aylward, the drummer, is negotiating an exceedingly large sale of smuggled opium to a company of Chinamen in Portland. This deal

is to be carried through directly as soon as the details of the 'run,' and the delivery of the goods are settled upon. Ah Wong, a Chinese merchant in Seattle is to receive the dope, and conceal it until it can be forwarded safely. The run will be made in two or three weeks, and the transaction will be so important that it will be apt to bring many of the principals of the ring together. That's one piece of news. Now, what do you think of this?"

Mr. Andrews handed Pete an open letter with a printed sheet pinned to it. Our hero took it with surprise, and saw that it was from a sheriff of a large manufacturing city on the Atlantic sea board, and read as follows:

Sir,

In reply to your inquiries, I enclose printed hand bill describing the person and crime of Arthur Jordan in 18—, and the reward offered for his capture. By reference to it you will see that it fully answers that of the Joe Cloon you ask about. If you know where the man is, arrest him, and notify me by wire. I will get a requisition, and come west by the first train. The reward still stands, and this county will pay it.

Yours very truly,

Sheriff.

The hand bill read as follows:

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

\$10,000 Reward.

Whereas, Arthur Jordan, an employee in the Treasurer's office of the County of ——— has disappeared, simultaneously with the sum of \$65,000 from the safe of the aforesaid Treasurer, and whereas through evidence duly weighed, it has been proven that said Arthur Jordan did feloniously steal, and convert to his own uses the said sum of money, we hereby offer Ten Thousand dollars for his arrest and conviction.

Jordan was 39 years old, and weighed about two hundred and fifty pounds, six feet, one inch tall, very active for one of his bulk, and strong as an elephant. Hair and eyebrows and eyelashes sandy, brick-dust complexion. Eyes pale blue in color, and large and well opened. Wore mustache and chin beard. Jordan is an educated man, and has a manner calculated to inspire confidence. Had studied law, and was reputed to be an able advocate, but never practised in this County.

Signed,

Captain Pete looked at Mr. Andrews.

"Well, Arthur Jordan has not changed much except to shave his face," said the latter smiling.

"By George!" gasped Pete, "It's him sure enough! Are you going to arrest him for the defalcation?"

"The crime seems to have been more in the nature of burglary than defalcation," replied Andrews. "But I think we'll give him some more rope to hang himself with. I want if possible to get the heads of the ring all together, and if I were to strike at Cloon now it would only cause the rest to draw in their necks. But the time of retribution is coming on swiftly."

That afternoon a message was brought to Captain Pete from Collector Hogan asking him to come to his office. Pete took his hat, and started at once. He found the collector sitting in his private room with Major Fisher. Both were looking serious. After the usual greetings the collector went to the door, and turned the key. Then, putting his hands in his pockets, and standing with his back to the fireplace facing the others, he began:

"Captain Pete, I want to ask your help. Before I tell you the occasion it is necessary to explain to you that during the past year I have not been at all satisfied with the workings of this department. A great majority of the employees under me have been forced into the customs service through the pressure of political influence, and I have found many of them incompetent or untrustworthy. In this condition of affairs things have happened, especially while I have been unable because of illness to attend closely to the duties of my office. These and other things lead me to believe the United States revenue has been defrauded for

some time past on a gigantic scale, and that there is an organized conspiracy in existence composed of men of ample means, who have worked together for the purpose of smuggling opium and bringing Chinese into the country through this customs district. I have found evidence of these facts on every hand since my suspicions have become aroused. At the same time I have discovered circumstances leading me to believe that a large portion of the fraud has been committed or made possible by the connivance of men in the employ of this department. When I became convinced of this state of affairs, I distrusted many of my subordinates, and dared not call upon them for fear of furnishing information to the people I was most afraid of. At this time my political enemies—some of whom I suspect are members of the conspiracy—took advantage of the opportunity to poison the ears of the head officials of the Treasury Department, and insinuate that I myself am accomplice in the frauds. Hemmed in by treachery, and enfeebled by disease, I had a hard battle to fight. There are two men in the Department, however, of whose faith I have always felt secure, and I confided in them. These two loyal men are Major Fisher here, and your friend Captain Kennedy, stationed in Victoria as confidential agent. We have been working unitedly for some months past for the purpose of overthrowing this conspiracy. We have during that time made many

startling discoveries, and collected much evidence against prominent men both on this side of the line and in British Columbia, who are engaged in this nefarious traffic. But until lately it has not seemed judicious to us to unmask our batteries. During the past week, however, I have received positive information leading me to believe that the master spirit of the conspiracy lives in Port Townsend"—here the collector fixed Pete with his eye, and a deep red stained our hero's cheeks—"intends within a short time, a couple of weeks probably, to make a 'run' which in the amount of goods involved will eclipse all his former efforts in the smuggling line. We have also reason to believe that this man intends this to be his last run. In fact, he has made every preparation to swindle his partners out of their share of the proceeds. He, through his trusted agent, a Portland Jew"—again Pete's cheeks glowed—"has chartered a ship in this harbor and is now loading her with flour for South Africa. He and the Jew—we believe—intend to levant together stowed away in this ship, as soon as they finger the money from this last big run."

The collector paused, and Pete who had been holding his breath for an unprecedented length of time, gave a spasmodic gasp which sufficiently indicated the state of his mind. He ejaculated with his first breath:

"Great Moses! What a fool I am!"

Major Fisher looked curious, but did not speak.

The collector smiled gravely at Pete, and our hero thought to himself:

"Good God! And I have been commiserating the weakness, and almost distrusting the faith of this old Roman who without a whimper, has for months been fighting a battle that most men would have given up in despair at the very outset. And no shame to them!"

The collector spoke again: "No doubt all this surprises you, Captain Pete, but the time hasn't been ripe for explanation before, and no doubt my silence has laid me open to a certain amount of misinterpretation. However, I know you, and am as sure of your loyalty and friendship as I am of my own wife's heart. Therefore I have sent for you to-day, and told you this story. I need your help. We three are not enough to manage things alone, and I have decided on closing the trap very shortly. We must catch Cloon"—Pete gave a convulsive start, and the old man smiled again—"at the moment of his final triumph. I shall trust no one implicitly but Major Fisher, Captain Kennedy, and yourself. But I will have a detachment of United States troops in readiness to assist should more force be necessary. Now, can I depend on you to help me?"

"To my last drop of blood!" And Captain Pete meant it literally.

"If I succeed," continued the old Roman, "I shall have vindicated my personal and official character.

And the moment that is done I have determined to resign my charge. The burden has been too heavy, and I can stand the strain no longer."

"Collector!" remarked Major Fisher impressively, while Pete stood by with a choking in his throat, "I give you my word that in my long experience of public affairs there has never been a case under my observation in which the man dignified the office, more than in yours."

"Collector!" said Pete, humbly approaching his old friend, "forgive me!"

"What for, Pete?" asked the collector with the old smile lighting up his warworn features. "For trying to warn me about Cloon? On the contrary, Pete, I am very much obliged to you, and appreciate highly the kindness of your intention. But how you came to know anything about him puzzled me, and it was some time before I understood it."

Pete hung his head, and did not answer. He felt that the collector was gazing at him keenly, but he knew that even now, and under the present circumstances he had no right to betray the confidence Andrews had reposed in him. Moreover from the collector's manner our hero was not sure that he did not divine the truth. Major Fisher, asked curiously:

"By the way, Pete, how did you find out Cloon was crooked?"

"Oh! I stumbled on it accidentally," answered he, making a statement that was partly true, and

partly false, but which luckily contented the major for the time being.

As Pete's services would not be needed until the date of the run, the lad made up his mind he would mould circumstances so he should be on hand to assist in the fun. A few minutes' reflection decided him to say nothing to Andrews in regard to the collector's plans. He thought, in case of a collision he could intervene. Acting the part of a Special Providence he could keep things running straight, and for the best interests of all. Anyway he determined he would on no account interfere to deny the staunch old chief of the customs the triumphant vindication he counted upon.

He met Cloon on the street as he was returning to the hotel, and was warmly greeted by the lawyer: "When are you going to Cortesana, Captain Pete?" he inquired in his loud, hearty tones. "I hear you are subpœnaed in the dog-stealing case."

"I shall go down on the thirteenth, sir," he said. The temptation was strong to add "to help to send your friend to jail," but Pete had a heap of common sense, and he refrained from stroking this dangerous dog's hair the wrong way when it would serve no good purpose.

"On the Olympian?" asked Cloon.

"Yes, sir."

"Then we'll be fellow passengers, and can talk the case over quietly as we travel."

"We may be fellow passengers, sir," answered

Pete demurely, but with a flash of fun in his eye. "I don't think, however, I shall discuss the case with you at any length."

Cloon's great red face lighted up with genuine humor, and he roared with appreciation of what he appeared to consider a great joke.

"I declare, Captain Pete," said he, "the more I see of you, the more you delight me. I'd like to take you with me for a voyage round the world!"

"Why, are you going to make one, sir?" our hero asked innocently.

A vivid flash of intelligence leaped to Cloon's wide eyes as he turned them with sudden concentration on Pete:

"Would you go if I were?"

His manner and tone were so intense that once more the lad almost lost his self-command. Then he said, with a resumption of his whimsical air: "Are you going to take your library with you? We might read law on the voyage."

Cloon's pale blue eyes veiled themselves, and Pete witnessed again that curious withdrawal of intelligence from the conspirator's face which has been described as like the turning down of a lamp:

"I'll let you know in case I make up my mind to go, Captain Pete."

Pete climbed to his room, and sat down to think before he faced Andrews:

"By George!" he said to himself, "things are getting mixed all around, and I seem to be regularly in

it. I almost believe Cloon wants me to go with him, and help him out in his future schemes against the peace of society. And I'm Andrew's right hand man, who's trying to entrap the collector. Lastly, I'm the collector's trusted ally in the plan to capture Cloon at the moment he thinks he is going off in a blaze of glory. Well, it's thro' Andrews that I'm earning thirteen dollars a day, and it seems to me that after all my first duty is to him. But confound it! I can't dash the cup from the collector's lips, and I don't see that I'm doing any harm by concealing what I know of his intentions. If I don't hunt up some new way of making myself useful to Andrews, tho', I'll feel as if I were stealing my salary. Well, from this time on I'll stick as close to Cloon as his shadow. It's curious that the more I see of the lawyer the less repulsion I feel towards him, and it's almost in my heart to be sorry for him now. Is he beginning to magnetize me? After all, I don't believe he can do me much harm in the short time he has to go at large."

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

AT last the morning of the thirteenth of September dawned, and valise in hand and accompanied by Mr. Andrews, he made his way to the wharf to embark on the Olympian. Andrews had given him minute instructions, and enjoined him particularly to keep a close watch as far as practicable on Cloon's movements.

Cloon was purchasing his ticket when they came up, and the three went together to the gang plank. Here Andrews, in his assumed character of eastern capitalist, shook hands cordially with Pete, and instructed him to hurry back. Then there was a sharp toot of the whistle, and a hoarse voice called:

"All aboard." Another handshake, and Cloon and our hero were off. They went into the cabin and deposited their bags upon a seat. Then the big man stretched himself and looked around.

"Well," he remarked, "we've got the day before us, and nothing to break the monotony of it but dinner. What shall we do to pass away the time? Do you play whist?"

"Yes, sir, I can play at it," responded Pete modestly, but his eyes lit up, for he was fond of the game, and in reality but little short of an expert.

"In that case," said the lawyer with satisfaction "we shall pass the day pleasantly. There are always whist players on this boat. You stay here, and I'll hunt up somebody."

After an interval he returned with two men of the genus drummer in tow. A table was selected, and cards procured from the steward. The two commercial men were partners, and our hero and the lawyer opposed them. It was evident at the start that all were keen players, and foemen worthy of each other's steel. A grim smile of satisfaction touched Cloon's lips as in the first hand he played a trump signal which his partner promptly recognized. The cards were about evenly distributed in the four hands, and necessitated very close playing for the "odd point." The drummers had evidently been partners before, and understood each other's game perfectly. When all but three or four cards had been played the lawyer made a bold but hazardous lead which depended for its success on the perfect comprehension of the game by his partner. Pete did not fail him, and taking the trick made exactly the return lead that was indispensable to the prosperous issue of the venture. In consequence they captured the "odd." The smuggler chief cast a glance of approbation at the boy, and then one of the drummers spoke up:

"What do you say if we make it interesting, and play for a dollar a corner?"

"All right," said Cloon, putting a silver dollar on the table between him and the speaker, who immediately supplemented it with another.

"Shall we have the same stake?" asked the second drummer of our hero.

Pete flushed deeply, and looked uncomfortable. Then he pulled himself together, and answered clearly and decidedly: "No, I thank you, sir. I never play for money."

"Oh!" said the man with a disagreeable sneer, "you're a Sunday-school kid, are you?"

Captain Pete had the pack of cards in his hand preparatory to dealing. He put them on the table in front of him, and said looking the drummer, who was a stalwart man, straight in the eye:

"I'm a gentleman, sir. And you're not one."

The other wheeled from the table, and exclaimed belligerently:

"Why, you confounded little whippersnapper! What do you mean!"

"Just what I say."

Pete's reply rang out clear as the clang of steel, and his face showed that he was ready for any settlement of the difficulty that the other might suggest. The second drummer leaned back in his chair, and looked amused. It was evident that he did not anticipate any probability of his partner's getting the worst of the quarrel. With a sudden crushing grasp, however, Joe Cloon's big hairy

hand fell on the irascible card player's shoulder as he displayed an inclination to rise.

"You sit down until I'm through!" he remarked in tones that left no doubt in the minds of the bystanders of what would occur if he were not obeyed. "My young friend is entirely correct. You are no gentleman, and you are not fit to be allowed in this cabin. Go out of it, and remain until we leave the boat at Cortesana, or you will get yourself into greater trouble than you'd be apt to have in trying to bully this boy."

Joe's voice was not loud enough to attract general attention, but it contained a bitter and concentrated quality that cowed the brawler instantly. Hanging his head, he passed out through the cabin door without a word. His companion, who apparently had no stomach for a share in the difficulty, sat perfectly quiet, although his amused smile had departed, and a nervous grin taken its place.

"Now," continued Cloon, resuming his former easy manner, "that matter being amicably settled, we will have to get a fourth player if we intend to continue the game."

"If you'll excuse me," remarked the remaining commercial man, "I'll ask to be allowed to drop out."

"Certainly," responded Joe genially, "you had better go and see if you cannot 'drum' a little sense into your companion's head."

Whether he followed this advice—which Cloon put some emphasis on—or not, he betook himself off in the direction of his retiring friend. When he had disappeared Pete turned to the lawyer, and said quaintly:

“I don’t think either of them would cut much figure leading a forlorn hope. But,” added he, “I should be greatly obliged to you, Mr. Cloon, for interfering in my behalf.”

“Which means that you are not, I suppose, and would have preferred to have settled the affair yourself,” returned the big man good-humoredly, “but you see the truth of the matter is that I hate a row. So I thought I would stop it.”

Pete chuckled:

“Why,” he said, “Mr. Cloon, your methods are very like those of the chap in Mark Twain’s ‘*Roughing It*,’ who was determined to have peace if he ‘had to lick a dozen men to get it.’ ”

“Well, perhaps so,” Cloon acknowledged with a twinkle in his eye.

There was no further trouble at all events, for neither of the men turned up again in the cabin, and at Whatcom which was the first stop the Olympian made, both departed. Pete and the lawyer passed the day in chatting on general subjects. Cloon appeared to be laying himself out to make a good impression, and our hero was amazed to find how much at home he had become with a man he knew to be a deep-dyed criminal. He seemed won-

derfully well informed on every subject, and conversed with a liveliness and good humor that made him the pleasantest of companions.

Tom Fisher, and Mr. Hagan were both on the wharf at Cortesana, for Pete had written. Tom showed his discretion in avoiding mention of Jack Hardy, and the letter of instructions Pete had sent him from Port Townsend until they were alone. Then he bombarded Pete with questions. He explained that something had come up in Port Townsend which had made him suspect Hardy of complicity in a larger and more important affair than the dog incident.

"And, Tom," added he, "I am bound in honor not to tell anybody what I know about it, so you must forgive me if I don't say any more."

Tom of course exploded:

"Well, I swear!" exclaimed he, "if you are not the most exasperating fellow! I wonder that I am able to stand it. Here you have me working for you like a dray horse, and even putting my reputation for sobriety into peril—at least with Hagan—and then not to know the object of all my toil. But I heard a fellow say the other night that 'a good sucker never kicks' so I suppose it's all right."

Pete was perfectly aware of Tom's loyalty, and in spite of this only half-feigned protest, he was perfectly at his ease in regard to the matter.

"I may need your help yet, Tom," said he.

"If you get it, I'll be shot!" was the answer.

"Well, it may come to that," remarked Pete with a serious face.

This reply made Tom's bump of inquisitiveness fairly twitch, but he saw that his friend was in earnest, and stopped his nonsense:

"Of course," he said, "you may count me in for any service you need. And if the affair is so serious I don't know anybody I'd play target for more cheerfully than I would for you. I hope *you* won't do the shooting at this target, tho'. You're too confounded accurate with your shooting iron."

"No," answered Pete, laughing at the idea. "I hope I won't have to shoot, but if I do it will be at a larger target than you, Tom."

"There's some consolation in that, but if your target is much larger, I pity it, for I wouldn't trust your missing me," concluded Tom.

Cloon had gone straight to the Boman House from the boat. Pete had told him that the Cortesana was much the better hotel, but the lawyer said he understood the first named hostelry was nearer the calaboose, and he wanted to be in the vicinity of his client so as to be able to confer if necessary. In fact, a couple of hours after their arrival Pete, who took good care to keep an eye on him, saw the lawyer's huge form pass down the street in the direction of the jail. Tom already had his instructions, and by taking a short cut managed to arrive first, and engage his friend the "turn-key" in conversation with the purpose of seeing the meeting between

Cloon and Hardy. Tom related the circumstances as they appeared to him afterwards to Pete, but here is what really occurred.

As soon as Cloon's form filled the doorway Hardy came forward:

"You're on hand, Boss," said he, with a leer. "I thought you would be!"

The huge man gazed down at the ratlike features of Hardy with every line of his face set and stony. Hardy caught his eye, and the reckless bravado that had been in his manner departed instantaneously. Cloon continued to look at him without a word. He tried to appear defiant, but despite himself his gaze fell before that implacable, pale blue eye. The rigid malignity of the lawyer's visage conquered his dare-devil spirit. It was an unequal contest. The Lion had overawed the Rat. The meaner spirit of Jack Hardy, though he was a resolute ruffian and steeped in crime to his neck, could not hold its own in a struggle for supremacy with a man like Cloon, in whom turpitude assumed a form as grand as it was infernal.

"Don't be mad, Boss!" spoke Hardy.

"You dog!" the intensity of the low voice fairly appalled the cowed villain. "You insensate brute! Do you think you can play with, and threaten me?"

Hardy's pale face became white as chalk, and its expression was strained and set. Cloon's eyes had hold of him, and in their depths was a menace so evil that he shivered in actual physical fear.

"Be easy on me, Boss. I'm sorry!"

"You'd better be if you care for the safety of your worthless skin. Now listen. I'll defend you at this trial. I know the facts, and can get you off. Swear you were trying to steal the mastiff, and had no intention of killing him. When you are discharged go straight to Ben and stay in the *cache* until I tell you what to do. Will you obey me implicitly? Speak quick!"

"Before the Lord I will, Boss. An' I'll never git fresh again."

"You'll never have a chance to do so but once more."

Hardy shuddered, and the lawyer turned to the jailer who stood with Tom out of earshot, and at some distance. In that brief moment his face changed so that it would not have seemed possible that it could have shown the devilish malevolence of a second before, and his round, hearty, cordial voice rang out:

"Well, jailer, this isn't a pleasant place, and the sooner you let me out the better I'll like you."

Tom reported to Captain Pete that lawyer Cloon appeared to be a very genial, good-humored sort of a fellow. He had talked earnestly a few minutes with Hardy, and the latter seemed very respectful to him. So difficult is it to interpret correctly what one's eyes see.

Cloon had invited our hero to dine with him at the Boman House, and in pursuance of his intention to

keep as close as might be to him, Pete had accepted the invitation:

"Well, have you seen your worthy client?" asked he as their plates were being changed.

The lawyer wiped a sudden smile of reminiscence off his lips with his napkin, and replied:

"Yes. To tell you the truth, Captain Pete, my 'worthy client' is an ill-conditioned brute, but business is business, and I am very much afraid I shall have to prevent you from sending him to jail."

"Why, you don't really think you can do it, do you, Mr. Cloon?" asked Pete, his interest in the subject getting the better of his determination not to discuss the case with Hardy's champion.

"If Judge Wine knows any law, it's as certain as the sunrise," returned the lawyer.

"I declare I don't see how it's possible!" said he.

"No? I suppose not, young man, and I'm not going to tell you until we get into court. It's a bad plan to give away your defense beforehand."

Pete laughed, and said:

"Well, you are right, of course. And I am doing just what I said I would not do the other day, talking the case over with you."

"Young men are liable to alter their opinions," observed Cloon with some significance.

"Yes," answered Pete lightly, "and if they don't change them when they have good reason to, they are apt to be pig-headed fools."

"That's as true as Gospel, Pete."

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

THE rustling of the papers, and the chatter of the lawyers who thronged the court room like crows in a corn field, was hushed as Judge Wine took his seat. The case of the State against Jack Hardy et al., for the breaking into a tent and stealing a dog was the first on the docket. Major Cool, of Whatcom, acted for the State, and Joe Cloon for the accused. It took some time to impanel a jury, as Cloon was exacting. Pete and Tom, sitting at a long table inside the railing, thought his purpose seemed to be to exclude intelligent jurors, as the objections were in almost every instance confined to such men as belonged to the higher or educated classes. Whenever the proffered man was bullet-headed, and his countenance indicative of strong passions or bad habits, the counsel for Hardy was content to accept him.

At last the panel was complete, and Major Cool arose, and stated the case as already known to the reader. The Major was a picturesque speaker, and he placed the very scene before the jury: the faithful animal guarding the tent; the stealthy approach, the cruel cunning with which they inveigled the mastiff from his post, and their ferocious rejoicing over the dumb beast when they had him lassoed and

helpless. Then how they rifled the tent, and finding nothing of value, cursed the innocent dog again and sneaked off to the depths of the forest, there to perpetrate a crime the meanness and savagery of which he had no words to describe. The appointed spot was reached; the noble mastiff, who of all the party, came nearest to possessing human attributes, was haled beneath the limb of a yew tree, and this very man, Jack Hardy, with a refinement of malignancy worthy of the Indian warriors who had formerly inhabited these sylvan shades, delayed the execution that he might with his dextrous fingers, practised in the unhallowed operation by previous sinister experience, make a hangman's knot for the more efficacious choking of this majestic animal, the loyal friend, and self-constituted protector of man. As his first witness he would call William Black, the constable.

Black deposed as to the condition in which he found the tent, and the marks of the struggle during which the dog was captured; the threatening note in which the malefactors said they were going to hang the dog, and that Pete would be the next victim. Then he told of Long Tom's appearance with the information that he had seen the mastiff being dragged along the trail in the forest by three men; how they had gone in pursuit; how Captain Pete had scouted ahead, and come back with the intelligence that the men were preparing to hang the dog in an open glade. Then he related the capture.

In cross-examination Cloon asked the witness if anything had been taken from the tent. Witness believed not; it was "rummaged."

Has the witness described the capture fully?

To the best of his recollection he had.

"Oh, all right. Now how about that note, Mr. Black, of whose contents you seem to have such a vivid remembrance. I suppose of course it was preserved so it could be placed in evidence! So intelligent and careful an official as yourself would not neglect that?"

The constable looked confused. It will be recalled by the reader that Captain Pete was ashamed of his inveteracy in forcing Hardy to eat the note, and had begged his companions not to mention the incident. It was now evident that Cloon being aware of the episode was determined to have the knowledge of it brought before the court, either with the design of annoying Pete, or in order to prejudice the minds of the jury.

The constable fidgeted, and then looked uneasily around and caught Captain Pete's eye. Our hero's face was red, but he nodded to Bill. The latter construed the signal as a permission, and his uncertainty disappeared at once. He told the whole story, explaining that he had not thought the letter swallowing incident pertained to the case.

"You answer questions!" said the lawyer with a grimness and severity that made the prize-fighting

constable stiffen up. "It is not your place to determine what is pertinent to this case."

"Tschutt! Tschutt! nor yours either," mildly said the judge.

The counsel smoothed the stern lines from his face, and answered:

"Yes, your Honor, but I am very anxious to show the jury that Captain Pete was not acting in the cold blood essential to the impartial dealing out of justice to my client. I am through with the witness."

Major Cool smiled genially as he took the witness in rebuttal: "Are you sure, Mr. Black, that Hardy did not eat the letter willingly, and of his own accord?"

"He seemed very willin' an' even eager, sir, the last time it was offered him," returned the constable, with a grin.

Even the judge and Cloon smiled, and Tom Long, better known as Long Tom, was called to the stand. He related seeing the three men dragging the dog through the forest in the early morning, and how after hearing that Captain Pete's tent had been broken into and the dog kidnapped, it had occurred to him that there was some connection between the two events; so he had notified our hero of what he had seen. Then he described the chase in the woods substantially as Black had done. Major Cool asked if he had seen Hardy eat the letter. He replied that

he had noticed Hardy devouring something with relish, but he could not swear it was the letter as he had never seen that document.

"That will do," said the major. The jury grinned this time, and Tom whispered to Pete that "Major Cool was a sharp old codger, and had made Cloon's thunderbolt innocuous."

"Where were you born, Mr. Tom Long?" asked Cloon.

"In h'England, sir."

"Is it possible! What is your occupation?"

Witness, beginning to look worried:

"I am a laborer, sir."

"Ever do anything else?"

"Yes, sir."

"What?"

"I was a sailor?"

"What ship were you on last?"

Witness, hanging his head:

"The *Monarch*, sir."

"Ah! the British ship-of-war stationed at Esquimalt, in Vancouver's island. How did you come to leave her?"

Witness, very much confused: "I took French leave, sir."

"Indeed. What do you mean by that?"

"Deserted in Victoria, sir."

Cloon:

"That will do."

Major Cool, in rebuttal:

"How long were you a sailor in the *Monarch*, Tom?"

"Over two years, sir."

"Do you like the United States?"

"I object! as trivial and irrelevant!" interrupted Cloon.

Major Cool:

"Not at all, your Honor. I have a distinct object in view."

Judge Wine: "Continue, Major."

Joe Cloon: "I except."

Major Cool:

"Well, Tom, you may answer my question."

"Do I like the United States, sir? Of course I do. I have better friends here, and am making a better living than I h'ever did in h'England."

"Are you going to remain here?"

"Yes, sir. I'll take out my papers, and become a citizen as soon as possible."

Major Cool:

"And you will make a very good one, Tom. Sit down."

Long Tom sat down with an expression of relief on his face, and Tom Fisher nudged Pete once more, and whispered:

"Ain't the Major a dandy? He spikes Cloon's guns every time!"

The bailiff: "Captain Pete Graignic!"

Pete went into the witness stand, and in response to the questions of the prosecuting attorney related

the circumstances of the breaking into his tent, and the abduction and attempted hanging of the dog. He was a good witness, and the dullest of the jury-men was interested, and listened eagerly to his version of the story. Of his own accord he referred to the letter he had forced Hardy to eat. He acknowledged that he was angry and excited at the time, and on reflection was sorry for the occurrence. He hoped the scroll had not disagreed with the prisoner, and after all, it was not the first time a man had had to eat his words.

Cloon took the witness:

"Now, Captain Pete, about this dog of yours that you say was stolen. May he not have followed these men of his own accord? other dogs often do such things."

"There are dogs, and dogs, sir," answered Pete smiling, "Let me show you—"

Without waiting for the counsel to answer he put a whistle to his lips. Two piercing toots resounded through the court room. Cloon frowned, Major Cool smiled, and the jury straightened themselves with evident interest in these unusual proceedings. The next instant the great mastiff dashed thro' the open door of the room, and bounded on the witness stand by his master's side. Cloon grew red in the face, and said to the judge:

"I appeal to your Honor to have the dangerous brute removed. This court is not a dog show, and besides the animal may bite my client."

In fact Jack Hardy had shrunk back in trepidation, but Judge Wine was evidently interested. He said:

"The dog looks very pacific, Mr. Cloon. Why did you bring him in, Mr. Graignic?"

"I wished Mr. Cloon and the jury to see, sir, how improbable it is that he would willingly follow anybody off."

"I object!" exclaimed Cloon. "Your Honor, this is not dignified, and entirely out of order!"

"It is my place to decide what is dignified, and in order here, Mr. Cloon," said the judge. "This is interesting, and may have a bearing on the case. Your objection is overruled. Proceed with the demonstration, Mr. Graignic."

The audience crowded to the railing, and the jury leaned forward in anticipation. It was evident that Cloon had no sympathizers in his desire to shut off the proceedings. Major Cool sat smiling broadly, for he felt sure of a verdict if they could interest the jury in Dope.

"Proceed," again said Judge Wine.

The room was still as an Arctic waste, and every eye bent on the dog and his young master. Pete thought a moment. Then he said:

"Dope, go guard Judge Wine."

As he spoke, he pointed to the judge. The mastiff gazed in his face as if to be sure of his meaning. Then he deliberately walked over to the platform on which his Honor sat, and leaping up, lay down at

his feet. The judge looked at him in a kindly manner, and patted his head.

"Now," continued our hero. "If you will permit me, I will go out of the room. While I am absent let any one try to coax him away from your Honor. Food may be offered him, or other tests applied, only I would not advise any one to approach you too closely until I release him from his trust."

"Go," said the judge, after a slight hesitation.

Pete passed through the door, and his steps were heard echoing down the stone floor of the corridor. Judge Wine looked around with a smile which was given back with interest by the spectators, the jurymen, and the learned lawyers who participated in this strange scene transpiring in the Hall of Justice.

"Perhaps," said he, after an amused pause, "some one will volunteer to take the dog away. Will you try it, Mr. Cloon?"

"No! I thank you," answered the lawyer. "I want no part in this extravaganza."

"Permit me to make a suggestion, Judge," said Major Cool. "Is there anyone in the court room who knows much of dogs? If so, it would be interesting to have such an one try."

Several voices were now heard in the audience adjuring Hugh to "go in and try his luck." Presently a prepossessing young fellow stepped forward. Tom Fisher recognized him as a man who trained and sold dogs at his ranch near the town. His abilities in the line of animal training were well

spoken of, and Tom began to tremble for the success of Pete's experiment.

The expert passed in through the railing gate, and came boldly up to the mastiff. As he approached Dope raised himself and gazed at him, but Hugh did not hesitate. In a moment he had put his hand on the dog's head. To everybody's amazement, he quietly lay down again in his former position. Hugh continued to fondle and pet him, and the dog received his caresses with apparent pleasure. Then the dog trainer started away, saying:

"Come on, old fellow!"

Dope looked at him in a friendly way, but did not budge. Then Hugh went back and laid hold of his collar, and pulled him, again commanding him to "come on" in a tone of sharp authority. This time Dope's lip went up, and there was a flash of white teeth accompanied by a deep, warning growl.

Hugh drew back and said:

"I don't want to monkey with him no more. He's a dandy, he is! He ain't got a trace of vice, an' he's only obeyin' orders. Let somebody else have a try at him."

Another man came from the audience, but as he drew near the mastiff arose on his haunches and growled so fiercely that he stopped at a distance, and dared come no further. Then a voice suggested that Tom Fisher, Captain Pete's partner, should make the essay. Nothing loath, Tom went

forward. Dope was even more gracious to him than he had been to Hugh, but the noble brute acknowledged but one master and when Tom tried to draw him away from his post, the same warning growl cautioned him to desist.

"An extraordinarily faithful brute," said the judge, patting the animal once more as Tom returned discomfited to his seat. "I think we may take it for granted that he was not coaxed away from the place his master had stationed him to protect. Bailiff, call Mr. Graignic."

Pete came in with a confident smile on his face, and took his place in the witness box.

"Your dog is a faithful animal, and fully deserves your trust," said the judge.

"Has he stood the test, your Honor?"

"Completely. You had better send him out now."

"Here Dope!"

The dog sprang up with alacrity, and went to his master's side. Pete patted his intelligent head affectionately, and whispered a few words in his ear. The mastiff walked sedately down the aisle, every eye following his movements, and passed out of the apartment.

"I have nothing further to ask the witness," announced Mr. Cloon.

Then Major Cool arose, and presented his case. He said he could call more witnesses if necessary to prove the facts already presented, but he felt the in-

telligent jury was already convinced of the baseness of the three malefactors arraigned before them, and to adduce further testimony in a case so singularly clear would be to affront their intellects. Therefore he would lay the testimony before them with the certainty in his own mind that they would bring in a verdict finding the three prisoners, and especially the man Hardy, the deepest-dyed villain of the lot, guilty.

A short pause ensued, and Pete and Tom drew long breaths of triumph, for they felt certain they had won the case. Then Cloon arose like a tower. He wiped his lips with a silk handkerchief, and leisurely surveyed the jury:

"May it please your Honor, and my friends in the jury box," he said, "I have listened to the major's masterly presentation of a very weak case with the utmost admiration. His conduct of it has been able, and this preconcerted trained dog exhibition, which has just passed, is ample evidence of the fact. There has been a halo of romance thrown about Captain Pete and his dog Dope which renders it difficult for the average man to see anything wrong in them. Then, in effective contrast, my clients, and particularly poor Hardy have been painted in colors as black as the villainy with which they are charged. But you, my friends in the jury box, are I am happy to say far from being average men, and I have observed as I sat here how each intelligent mind was sifting the false from the real,

and rendering all the efforts of my worthy friend and his facile and well-trained witnesses—biped and quadruped—abortive. You have noted in the first place there was nothing taken from the tent, and that fact has raised doubts in your acute minds as to whether it was really ever forcibly broken into. For why should men force an entrance, and then depart empty handed? Then this note we hear so much about, which this daring and resolute Captain Pete forced, with the aid of his fierce dog, my helpless client to eat. After all, why should they make so much fuss about this note when they cannot produce it? You gentlemen are sagacious enough to detect the truth, that the contents of this note were different from what has been testified here before you. Furthermore, I wish to confess to you that my worthy client assures me that he never had the educational advantages in early life with which it is apparent that you were all favored, and that he can barely write his own name.” Here the pleader paused a moment, again wiped his lips, and looked radiantly at the jury who were listening with close attention, and pleased faces. Then he continued: “Now I want to tell you a thing that you are ignorant of only because your minds have never been turned in this direction. It is this! There is no such thing as actual property-right in dogs. In other words, there is no legal title in them, and one cannot legally own what he can not prove to be his.

The statute books of this state and county do not contain one word that my friend the major can distort to this effect. What then becomes of the charge of dog stealing? I leave it to your clear heads to determine. Now again as to the hanging incident, which has been so related as to prejudice you against my clients! I wish to call your attention to a fact that has been carefully kept in the background by my ingenuous friend on the other side. This is that one of these poor men who are now awaiting your intelligent verdict to set them at liberty, was a few nights since bitten severely by this savage brute they have attempted to impose on you as an affectionate animal. Without an atom of cause the dog attacked him ferociously, and nearly maimed him for life. So Dan Homan and his two friends, worthy citizens of this commonwealth, felt it their duty to society to so deal with the vicious cur it would endanger the lives of innocent people no longer. They met it one morning, and took it to the forest, and at the time they were apprehended were about to treat it as noxious brutes should be dealt with in the interests of humanity."

As Cloon sat down Major Cool arose, and in a short speech showed the sophistry of the arguments to which they had listened. Then Judge Wine summed up, and the jurors withdrew.

The next case was called, but Pete and Tom remained in the court room to await the return of the

jury. In the course of an hour it filed in, and the foreman handed an envelope to the judge, who opened it, and read as follows:

"We find Dan Homan, Dewitt, and Jack Hardy guilty of stealing the dog, but it is not proven that it is a crime."

Judge Wine smiled, and said:

"Mr. Cloon, I think, under the circumstances, I shall be obliged, somewhat regretfully, to discharge your clients."

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

TOM FISHER and Captain Pete opened their eyes in surprise when they heard the verdict. They had fully expected that Major Cool's splendid management of the case would bring them victory.

"I swow!" exclaimed Tom with his usual explosiveness. "Now, what do you think of that, Pete?"

"It's too bad," answered Pete, "I hate to see those brutes go scot free. But I must acknowledge that Cloon is awfully clever."

"I tell you what!" exploded Tom, springing to his feet, and leading the way out of the room. "Come along with me. I've got a scheme! And we'll give them a little trouble yet."

"What is it?" asked Pete with interest.

"Why you know Mr. Linden has just been appointed agent for the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals! Let's go and see him, and perhaps he will arrest Hardy and the others. Even if he can't convict them, it will give them another taste of jail. I don't believe even Cloon would bail them out for fear they would skip their bonds, and take 'French leave,' as Long Tom has it."

"I believe you're right! Let's hunt up Linden at once," said Pete.

A short walk brought the boys to Linden's house.

Mr. Linden was home, and greeted them cordially. As soon as they opened their business he became deeply attentive. He had not heard of the stealing of Dope as it had not been published in the Progress, and at Pete's suggestion, had been kept as quiet as possible. Now he entered into the affair with zeal, and when he had got the whole story his eyes flashed with indignation at the cruelty of the transaction:

"Wait a minute and I'll go right down with you," he said as he passed into an adjoining apartment.

He reappeared shortly in the S. P. C. A. uniform, and with a glittering badge on his breast:

"Now," he said, "come on, and we'll round up these hangers of dogs!"

They walked briskly down the street, and towards the lower end of it saw Hardy, Dewitt and Dan Homan going into the Workingman's Home. Linden quickened his pace, and they followed.

Hardy was just saying, "Here's to lawyer Cloon, boys!" as he raised his glass to his lips, when Linden laid his hand on his shoulder, and said:

"I arrest you on the charge of Cruelty to Animals."

Hardy's jaw fell, and he put his glass back on the counter. Homan drew back in surprise, and Dewitt, who was the hindmost of the three sneaked toward the door. Pete stepped in front of him, and said:





HE FELT THE BASE OF HIS EAR TOUCHED BY SOMETHING COLD.

"It won't do, Dewitt. You'll have to take your medicine with the rest."

The rascal looked at the boy a moment, and then disconsolately ranged up to the counter again. By this time Hardy had regained his nerve, and said:

"You can't arrest me! I've just been discharged."

"Can't I?" replied Mr. Linden. "You make a motion to resist or escape, and see what will happen."

Hardy looked the officer coolly in the eye, and at the same time thrust his hand behind him as though to draw a weapon from his pocket. At the same instant Dan Homan sprang forward with a heavy beer glass uplifted to strike Linden. The S. P. C. A. agent was a vigorous young man, and a trained athlete; he swayed his shoulder slightly, and his left fist shot out like lightning. It met the bridge of Homan's nose with the sound of a cleaver on a leg of beef. The blood spurted out on either side, splashing the mirror across the bar, and sprinkling the floor in the middle of the room. Dan threw up his arms and fell backwards, dragging Dewitt with him. Jack Hardy, with a devilish look on his face drew his knife while this went on, for Linden did not have time to attend to the two blackguards simultaneously. As the fingers of Bill Kelley's friend grasped the handle of his weapon he felt the base of his ear touched by something cold. His hand

dropped as if palsied, and turning his head he looked with ludicrous dismay down the barrel of Captain Pete's revolver.

"Hands up!" said the lad sternly.

The outlaw's arms rose reluctantly in the air, and Pete reached forward and removed a huge bowie knife from his hand. Linden, who had seen the latter part of this incident, drew out a pair of patent handcuffs, and snapped them on Hardy's wrists. Then he turned his attention to the other two, and assisting them to their feet, manacled them also. While this operation was being performed Hardy leaned over and whispered something to the bartender, who nodded his head in response. Pete in a low tone called the officer's notice to this, and the latter replied:

"Yes, I expect it was a message to his lawyer. I must hurry and put them under lock and key, and get a warrant for them, or Cloon will have them out again, and perhaps get us into trouble."

"Here comes Bill Black, the constable," said Tom Fisher, as that worthy appeared on the scene. "Can't we turn them over to him, and start for the court room right off?"

"Yes, of course! A good idea."

The agent explained matters to Bill, who was not only willing but delighted to have the three ruffians in his hands again, and protested that nothing save an order from the court should make him give them their liberty.

"Now for the police judge!" exclaimed Linden, as he and the two boys went out.

"Hold on a bit," said Tom who had been reflecting. "I believe we can get a warrant from Judge Wine without any trouble. I am sure he was disappointed when he had to let Hardy and Co. go."

"Yes, so we can," agreed Pete. "And as the charge is different from the first one on which they were arrested, it will be all right, and better in his court than elsewhere."

"Make tracks!" said Linden, who was a man of action. And away they went as fast as their feet could carry them.

They caught the judge just at the beginning of the recess, but he obligingly went back with them, and when he had heard what Mr. Linden had to say made no trouble about issuing the desired document.

"Captain Pete," he observed as they were departing, "I advise you to take very great care of that noble dog of yours. Mr. Cloon is right in that point of law that he so cleverly made, and singular as it may seem, you cannot be said to legally possess your own dog."

"They shall not get him again!" said Pete with clenched teeth.

"That's right," returned the judge.

A few minutes after, while Mr. Linden and the boys were still in the court room, Cloon hurriedly

came up. As he caught sight of Captain Pete, he stopped short:

"So you've got ahead of me, have you, Pete? And nabbed Hardy again. Well, that's smart of you and all's fair in law and war, so I have no grudge against you. What's the charge against the boys this time?"

"It is Cruelty to Animals, sir," said Mr. Linden, coming forward. "And the charge is brought by the Society."

Cloon thought a moment, wrinkling his massive brow, and half closing his eyes. Then he silently nodded his head:

"Yes, that was a sharp move, Pete. I guess you can make it stick. What's the penalty, M-r-r. Officer?"

"Two years' imprisonment, and a fine of five hundred dollars."

"Whew!" whistled the lawyer. Then he asked Pete: "Are you going back in the boat with me in the morning?"

"Why, won't you stay to the trial? It will come up to-morrow."

Pete put this question in surprise, and some dissatisfaction, as he did not want to lose sight of Cloon. He had never thought of the lawyer's deserting Hardy.

"No," he replied, an inscrutable expression settling on his face. "I cannot afford to waste more time here."

"But your clients—" suggested Pete.

"Jail is a pretty good place for them," returned Cloon with a grim smile. "I think I'll go down and see them, and try to reconcile them to their fate."

He walked off to the jail with a smile while Pete looked on in bewilderment:

"I wonder what it means," thought he. "He seems to be certain Hardy will not squeal, and yet he plainly threatened him in the letter Tom Fisher intercepted; and Cloon did not disregard it. He must be pressed for time, or he would not take any chances. Perhaps he reckons on scaring or coaxing Hardy into silence. I'd like to hear their interview in the jail!"

As Captain Pete had surmised that interview was interesting. Cloon took Hardy on one side where he was out of hearing of the jailer, and the other prisoners:

"Now Jack," he said. "I want you to listen closely to what I am going to say, and if you are wise, you will carefully follow my directions. I have done my best for you, and got you off from the charge on which you were tried to-day. This I did because you have been a useful blackguard, and I felt it my duty to look after you. Now this second charge which you and Homan like fools made more serious by resisting, is a far graver affair. This S. P. C. A. has large powers, and money to back them up. Even I cannot defend you success-

fully. So the best thing to be done is for **you** to plead guilty. In the meantime I will see that you get this afternoon a watchspring saw, a sectional jimmy, and a gun. If you can't get out of this shack of a jail with their aid you deserve to go to Walla Walla for a brainless numskull. The same hand that gives you the tools will be on the lookout for you with a boat. He will tell you where. When you are free make for Ben's house in Port Townsend, and lay by there in the *cache* until I see you. These are your orders, and if you deviate from them one inch I will leave you to your fate."

Hardy had listened to this long harangue with a downcast but deeply attentive face. Now he said: "And Dan and Dewitt?"

"Let them go to—Walla Walla. One's a fool, and the other a treacherous cur. You and I have no use for them."

"All right, boss. I'll do just as you say. Don't fail me."

"No fear!" And the burly conspirator left the jail. "Now that's all settled," he soliloquized as he returned to the hotel. "I'll see that he has his chance to get away. If he don't escape, he can't blame me, and he won't split. I'll probably be at sea before he can do any damage. It's curious what a liking I have taken to this half-breed boy that keeps getting in my way. I've every inclination to take him along with me when I levant.

He's smart as a kingfisher, and has plenty of nerve. And yet!—At times I fancy he suspects something, and is afraid of me. If I want him I must make up my mind pretty soon, for things are coming to a focus. The big run **MUST** come off next week, and then I **MUST** get away. For the first time in my life I am nervous and apprehensive. I feel as if some misfortune were hanging over me. Yet there's no cause for my fears. My plans are well laid, the collector is helpless, even if he knew, for the department is as much under my control as his. Anyhow, I can't alter things now. I've got to go ahead."

He came to this conclusion and the hotel simultaneously, and there we shall leave him and go back to Captain Pete.

Our hero found that he had a little leisure on his hands for the first time since his return to Cortesana, so he and Tom took advantage of it to go over to see how the improvements had been progressing on his property at Hidalgo Point. Mr. Metcalf had gone energetically to work on the two acres he had leased, and the shingle mill would in a very short time be ready to fill orders. Long Tom too, had made quite a clearing along the water front. A portion of Pete's thirty acres was covered with very fine cedar trees, and our hero had one of his ideas in connection with the new shingle mill.

Mr. Metcalf was directing the driving of piles for his new dock. He greeted Pete cordially, and

displayed with pride the progress he had made. Finally the lad asked him where he was going to get his shingle bolts.*

"Why," said Metcalf, "I shall have no difficulty about getting plenty. The ranchers on the islands near by will get them out for me in their spare time. I'll begin making contracts next week."

"You'll have to haul them some distance," observed our hero.

"Yes, I shall build me a number of large scows, and I've got my eye on a tug that I think I'll purchase."

"What will you pay for bolts?" asked Pete.

"The highest market price. I believe they are worth —— now."

"Will you give me a contract for —— feet delivered on the premises for ——?" asked the boy.

"That difference will about cover the expense of your towage."

"When will you deliver them?" queried Metcalf, after a moment's consideration.

"I'll begin on the first of October, in two weeks, and have them all in during the month."

"Done!" exclaimed Metcalf. "Come in the office, and we'll write out the agreement."

As they entered, Tom who had listened to the conversation in surprise, for Pete had not unfolded

* Shingle bolts are the sections of log from which the shingles are riven.

his plan to him, twitched his friend's arm, and whispered:

"Are you going crazy, Pete? Where are you going to get all that cedar so soon, and deliver it here!"

"It's all right, Tom," Pete returned. "I've thought it out."

"Oh! you have, have you?" Tom grumbled. "It's a pity you wouldn't mention it, instead of paralyzing a fellow this way!"

The agreement was drawn up, and signed, and as the boys went over to where Long Tom was working Pete explained his idea:

"You see, Tom, that about ten acres of my land that lies at the back is cedar, and the sooner I get it cleared the more valuable it will be. Besides I don't believe shingle bolts will ever be worth any more than they are to-day."

"But you'll have to start a regular logging camp, and how can you look after it while you are off with Andrews?"

"I think Long Tom, and four other men will be able to do it. I'll put Tom in charge, and you can attend to the money matters for me, and see that it runs smooth."

"By Jiminy! Old fellow, that's pretty cool. You don't hesitate about piling the work on me, do you? But never mind, Pete, you tell me what's needed, and I'll do it. Golly! Ain't we getting

to be men of affairs tho'! Why, Pete, the first thing you know, you'll be actually rich!"

"I mean to be, Tom. I know what to do with all the money I can make. Tom, do you know Grace Hogan is coming back to Port Townsend in a few weeks?"

"No? Gee whiz! Won't she be surprised when she sizes you up!"

CHAPTER NINETEEN

THE new trial of Jack Hardy and his brother ruffians, on the charge of cruelty brought by the S. P. C. A., resulted in the men being sentenced as the boys had hoped, to the full penalty of the law, two years' imprisonment, and a fine of five hundred dollars. Joe Cloon had left for Port Townsend, and Captain Pete and Tom Fisher were overjoyed to feel that they had been the means of bringing the dog hangers to justice, after all.

Their self-gratulations suddenly ceased, however, when on the next morning they learned that during the night Jack Hardy had made his escape from the jail. Pete was wroth with himself for not having foreseen and guarded against the possibility:

"Of course," he said to himself, "Cloon had a finger in this pie, and that is the reason he went off so unconcernedly to Port Townsend. Well, perhaps the next time it will be my turn. I'll bet that Jack Hardy is on his way to Port Townsend now; and the cave in the cliff is about where he'll bring up. He'll probably hang out there until he gets a chance to go to the other side of the line on one of the smuggling craft. Perhaps when the col-

lector puts out his drag net he'll be among the devil fish that are captured. I hope so, anyway!"

No trace of the fugitive could be gained, though the method of his flight by sawing through the wooden wall of the shack that served Cortesana for a jail, was easily seen.

Pete had arranged the details of his new speculation in shingle bolts and gotten the matter in train so that Long Tom and Tom Fisher could attend to it. He felt easy in his mind over his personal affairs as he bade good-bye to his friends, and once more boarded the Olympian. Mr. Andrews met him on the wharf, our hero having wired of his return, and seemed delighted to have him back. When told of the flight of Jack Hardy from the Cortesana jail, he agreed that the escape was probably made with the connivance of the lawyer.

"Cloon was away from his usual haunts last night," said he, "and I couldn't find where he went. But the Jew Aylward is here again, with the Portland Celestial who is acting as representative of the Chinese who have pooled to buy the whole of the opium that is to be brought over in the next run. Ah Wong, of Seattle, who is to act as receiver, and hide the dope, is in town also. I believe the great event is to take place in a day or two. I want you to keep a lookout on the cave behind the clump of bushes on the cliff from your old spying ground for the next few nights, for Pete," he concluded, "I

have every reason to suppose that the large cargo will be landed there."

That afternoon Major Fisher came to the hotel, and told Pete that if he could get away without neglecting his duty to Andrews, the collector desired him to come up to his house that evening.

"Come by all means, Pete, if you can," said the major, "for Captain Kennedy will be there, and he is anxious to see you. Besides, I believe there is some important move on hand that you will be sorry to have missed."

"All right! I'll be there, major. You may depend on that," answered Pete.

He needed no urging, for he was almost certain from the fact of Kennedy's having left Victoria, that some decisive step was to be taken.

Andrews received several cypher telegrams during the afternoon, but he did not disclose their contents to Pete. His chief also sent out some messages after dinner, and it was evident to the boy that important events were at hand. But he knew that Andrews liked to keep the entire control of affairs, and he saw from his good-humored though serious face that whatever it was, was happening to his satisfaction.

Towards four o'clock Pete became so impatient that he took a walk along the wharves to tranquilize his nerves. This led to an unexpected meeting. Absorbed in anxious thought he had strolled on

without noticing what was passing about him, when a hearty voice said:

"Well, Captain Pete, I'm proud to see you! How do you do?"

Pete looked up and recognized in the brawny giant who spoke, his old friend Joe Hanlon the longshoreman. Joe was "tending hook," his usual job, and Pete now observed that he was helping to load a handsome barque of six or seven hundred tons called the *Bonito*, with flour. He was glad to meet Joe, and the latter on his part, was overjoyed. He called a man to take his place, and sat down with Pete on the stringer of the dock to have a chat:

"Well, cap'n," said he, "it's a long time since we foregathered, an' I hear you are growin' rich down there in Cortesana. You're lookin' well, sir."

"Yes, I'm all right, Joe," answered Pete. "And how are you and the boys getting along?"

"About the same as usual, sir, workin' hard, an' livin' rough. The boys are down in the hold of the *Bonito* stowing away cargo now. This is a pretty stiff job, for the orders is, I hear, to have this barque ready to clear day after to-morrow. They'll have to work night gangs, I expect, to do it."

This remark attracted Pete's attention. What he had heard the collector say about Joe Cloon and Sam Aylward suddenly recurred to him. They were preparing to fly on a barque laden with flour to South Africa.

"Where is the *Bonito* bound for, Joe?" Pete asked casually.

"She clears for Cape Town, I hear."

"Who is the captain?"

"He's a dago, sir," replied Joe, meaning as Pete knew a Spaniard. "Cap'n Anton Madeira, they call him. There he is now, coming aboard with that little slick chap."

Pete looked where Joe pointed and saw Sam Aylward, the Jew drummer of Portland, coming up the wharf with a tall, dark, sailorlike man. They went directly on board, and disappeared in the cabin, Captain Pete's brain was working full pressure again. It was evident to him that he had stumbled on the vessel that the conspirators intended to make their escape in. On reflection he concluded that this fact was known to both Andrews and the collector, and that they were basing their plans on the knowledge. He would possibly learn more about the matter when he met the old chief of the customs:

"At the same time," he thought, "I am glad to know that Joe Hanlon, and his 'boys,' Con Miller and Harry Prentice, have turned up just at this time, and are working on the *Bonito*. They may be of use, and I can depend on them as being honest and brave."

"Where do you and the boys live, Joe?"

"On the old shack yet, sir. It's moored near the slaughter house. If you can make time, come

down, and spend an evening with us. The boys will be mighty glad to see you."

"I'll come, Joe, and before long."

"That's right, sir. For the next two days we'll be either here working night shift, or home resting, so you can't miss us."

Pete told Andrews at their seven o'clock meal that night that he would look after Blue Shirt, and his chief cautioned him to take no risks as it was most important that the smugglers should not suspect their movements were being watched.

At eight sharp Pete rang the bell at Collector Hogan's residence and the door opened before the echo died away disclosing the old man himself in the entry, looking more alert than Pete ever remembered to have seen him.

"Come right in, my boy," he said. "We were awaiting you."

He led the way into the library where Major Fisher, and Captain Kennedy stood by the mantel. Warm greetings passed between the boy and the latter, and then Mr. Hogan spoke:

"Pete," he said, and his new alertness of manner was still more pronounced, "the time has come when we are going to begin the 'round up.' Tomorrow is the night fixed by Cloon for the great run, the largest ever attempted in the history of the Puget Sound custom department. Captain Kennedy has brought the news from Victoria, and from what I see here I am satisfied he is not mistaken in

the time set by the conspirators. At any rate, the captain has a sure hand watching on the other side, ready to wire the tidings the moment they are actually off."

"Jimmy?" queried Pete, looking at the officer.

Kennedy nodded silently, and the collector continued:

"I sent for you so that we could all take counsel together. There is one point on which we have been unable to obtain any information. This is as to where the smugglers intend to land this last cargo. From the fact that most of the principals involved in the transaction are now gathered in Port Townsend, we infer that the landing place will not be far distant from this city. Joe Cloon's policy holds boldness as least apt to be suspected, and he feels so certain that he can blind or if necessary control most of the customs officers stationed here, that I am sure he will not hesitate to take great chances. It seems to us that the only sure course is to not permit Cloon or Aylward, or Ah Wong, the Seattle Chinaman who is to receipt for the dope, to get out of our sight until they meet the contraband goods. The Major and Captain Kennedy agree with me in this view, and I called you in because from now on we are all likely to be busy as bees—having to do everything ourselves, and fearing to trust outsiders."

"Don't you think," asked Pete after a moment's silence, "that you and Major Fisher are too well

known to shadow the conspirators without running great risk?"

"We were discussing that point," said Major Fisher, "and had just about reached the conclusion that it might be well for us to disguise ourselves."

"Can you make any suggestion, Pete?" asked the collector.

Kennedy stared silently at the boy, who was apparently thinking very hard. Something in his manner recalled to the gallant revenue officer the occasion in Victoria when the lad had developed the plan that resulted in the capture of Mike McGovern, and Three-fingered Bill. He recollected how the modest lad had hesitated to give his advice in the presence of his elders. The remembrance impelled him to remark, with a twinkle in his eye:

"Want to take a little walk around the block with me, Pete, and see how the wind is?"

To the surprise of the three men, Pete's face lighted up, and he sprang to his feet:

"Yes, sir. I should! Come along. Perhaps the collector and Major Fisher won't mind waiting a few minutes."

The major and Mr. Hogan looked greatly astonished, but Kennedy winked at them significantly, and they made no objection when the two passed out. Pete struck into a rapid gait as soon as they reached the sidewalk, and Kennedy had to stretch his long legs to keep up with the eager pace of the youngster.

The key to Pete's action was this. As the collector had talked the boy's mind had gone over the ground like lightning, and he had come to one of his rapid conclusions. That cargo was surely going to be landed on the beach in front of the cave in the cliff. If done after midnight it would be perfectly safe, for a graveyard in Siberia would not be more deserted. Then the cave would furnish a perfect hiding place for the goods, and to land the contraband cargo right under the noses of the officers of the law was a piece of daring effrontery that fitted in with Pete's conception of Cloon's nature.

But the existence and location of the *cache* behind the cedar clump was a secret that belonged to Andrews as much as it did to himself, and he hardly felt that he had the right to relieve the collector's perplexity by disclosing its existence. When Kennedy half in fun, had made the suggestion of a walk, he suddenly made up his mind to a course of procedure. Blue Shirt's house was only about ten blocks distant. He would take Kennedy up to it, and let that keen-witted individual draw his own conclusions. He felt that even this was half treachery, but his motive was good, and he was determined that the collector should have the opportunity to vindicate himself even if he had to manipulate events slightly in order to bring it about.

Kennedy remarked, "Well, Pete," in a tentative way as they strode along, but the boy only walked faster. They soon turned into Spruce street, and

shortly stood on the edge of the cliff in the same spot where Pete had taken up his position when he had seen Aylward hoisted out of the cave. There was no moon, but the night was clear and starlit. Now Pete spoke for the first time:

"I wouldn't talk very loud, if I were you sir, Somebody is always apt to hear you, altho' this is a lonely sort of a place."

Kennedy stooped down, and peered into the lad's face:

"What's come over you, Pete?" he said. "I don't quite catch on! Why did you bring me here?"

He looked keenly around, and noted the situation of Blue Shirt's house, and its location. Then he gazed at the broad expanse of water glimmering in front, and finally his glance came back, and riveted itself on the small building on the edge of the cliff that contained the hoisting machinery, and had so puzzled Pete on his first introduction to it.

"What the—Ginger are *you* here for?" he asked softly of himself. Then he eyed Pete again, but the boy was craning his neck over the edge of the precipice as if his gaze were trying to pierce the gloomy depths below. When he looked up again after Kennedy had joined him in his scrutiny, he said:

"That's a queer clump of cedar down there! I wonder if anybody ever got down to it?"

The captain's eyes turned to the shed again, and then back to Pete. He began to see his way mistily, although he did not comprehend fully:

"There's something that boy wants me to get thro' my stupid head, and he is not at liberty to tell it! He must be honor bound, but why, I can't imagine."

Then he took a sudden and characteristic resolution:

"Pete," he said. "I am going to see the inside of that shed!"

"It's locked," said the boy.

"Pooh! I'm a pretty good burglar."

CHAPTER TWENTY

“WELL, go ahead,” said Pete, after a moment’s thought, “but if you strike a light, be careful that it can’t be seen from the house. I’ll let you know if you are likely to be interrupted.”

“Here goes then!” exclaimed Kennedy.

He leapt the fence and alighted as softly as a cat on the other side. As the boy had foretold he found the door locked. This did not trouble him, however, for he drew a bunch of long, thin, steel keys from his pocket, and after a short manipulation the ward sprang back with a faint click. Then Kennedy crossed the threshold, closing the door after him.

Our hero heard a crackle as if a match were being ignited, and then he could distinguish the steps of the revenue officer moving cautiously about inside. In a moment the swinging door, which has been before described as opening on the cliff face, creaked on its hinges, and by the aid of the dim light of the stars Kennedy’s head could be descried as if he were scanning the darkness below. Then the officer withdrew, and shortly the spar or boom to which the tackle and “bosen’s chair” were attached, was thrust out. This was apparently only an experiment, for it was immediately pulled back. Then the door re-

opened, and Kennedy flitted to Pete's side as swiftly as a shadow.

He grabbed the boy's shoulder by one hand, and turned his face up to the stars with the other. His eyes were alight, and his voice quivered with eagerness as he said:

"Pete, my son, I believe you know all about this, and I'm in a cave of gloom. What did you say about that clump of cedars we can just see down the cliff?"

"I said it was a queer clump, and wondered if anybody ever got down to it."

"Oh, yes! Well, my boy, if you'll come in that house I just left, and lower away on that tackle for me, I am going down."

Pete was taken aback for a second by the cool daring of the proposal. Then he considered, and finally said:

"It's a good time, and I don't believe you'll meet any one. Why not? Yes, captain, I'll handle the fall for you. I am curious myself."

"Come on!"

When they were inside, and the door closed and locked, Kennedy drew a small flat lantern from his breast. Holding this so that the rays of light did not shine towards the house, he searched a cupboard in the corner until he brought out a bottle of lubricating oil.

"This comes in handy," he remarked. "For if I understand matters at all, this wants to be a mighty

silent job. Greasing the sheaves of that tackle so it won't squeak will do no harm. Do you know how this apparatus works?"

"In a general way," answered Pete demurely. "I've seen tackles and purchases before."

Kennedy grinned at this reply, and said "all right." Then he rigged the boom from the window, and the tackle was drawn up with both blocks together so the officer could get into the "bosen's chair." When he was firmly seated, and swinging over space, he said: "Hold fast all a moment, Pete."

The boy took an additional turn of the rope around a convenient timber projecting from the wall, and waited. Kennedy reached behind him and brought out something in his hand whose steel barrel twinkled grimly in the light of the stars. Then he added:

"When I shake the rope once, you stop lowering, and make fast, Pete. At two shakes, hoist me up again."

"All right, cap."

"Then—lower away!"

Pete permitted the fall to slip through his hands, retaining the round turn about the timber for greater safety. The little wheels or sheaves inside the blocks revolved as the rope pressed on them, and Captain Kennedy passed out of sight. With every sense alert Pete continued to lower until to his excited fancy it seemed that the revenue officer must

have reached the shore at the bottom; then he felt a sudden jerk that made the blocks rattle. Securing the fall in two half hitches so that it could not give way was the work of a second to the former fisher boy. Then he leaned over the sill of the window, and strained his eyes to pierce the darkness beneath. Thirty-five or forty feet below, and just opposite the cedars he saw a black spot hanging in the air. This he knew must be Kennedy. To his dismay he perceived that the officer was at least ten feet out from the face of the wall, and seemingly still further distant from the cedar trees, which it will be recollected grew in a hollow in the cliff. Then the boy recalled that Alyward had had a line attached to the tackle to draw it in to him. He was startled at the thought, but as he considered the advisability of hoisting Kennedy up again he felt the stout boom above his head shiver and sway. He turned his gaze downward, and the black spot was oscillating in a constantly increasing arc to and from the face of the precipice. It was evident that the intrepid revenue officer did not intend to be foiled in his purpose, and was going to swing himself in until he could catch one of the trees.

"There's plenty of sand in the captain's craw," said Pete to himself admiringly. "But I must remember to keep a lookout at the back as well as the front. It would be awkward if Blue Shirt or any of his friends happened to turn up just at this time."

He opened the door and looked out. As he did so

he heard the latch of the front gate rattle, and light and rapid footsteps come up the path that led around the house to the kitchen door. Pete's heart thumped as if its machinery were out of order, and his hand instinctively felt for the revolver at his belt. Then he recovered his coolness, and stepped out of the shed, closing the door softly behind him.

"Captain Kennedy will have to look out for himself until I find out what this means!" he muttered.

He crept into the black line of shadow that lay at the base of the fence, and wormed himself along until when the newcomer had reached the back door step, Pete was not forty feet distant, and could see everything that occurred. Of one fact he was already sure. The visitor was not Cloon, but a much smaller man.

Rattat, rattat; rattat, rattat, tat.

Pete heard this singular knock, not unlike a telegraph call, with surprise. In response to it a window on the second story opened, and a man whom Pete at once recognized by his voice as Blue Shirt, put his head out.

"Who's there?" he said.

Pete was again astonished, for the reply was:

"Come down, Ben. It's me, Jack Hardy."

"All right! Wait two seconds," was the answer.

After a short interval the door opened, and Ben said:

"Come in. I won't strike a light, for the boss

told me to keep the house dark the next two nights. Where do you hail from, Jack?"

"I just got here in a skiff," Pete heard him reply. "The boss told me to report here."

Then the door closed. Pete made his way back to the shed wishing he could get at Kennedy to tell him the news, and hurry up his movements. But he found this unnecessary, for just as he reached the window sill two violent shakes were given to the rope, and he saw the black spot again swinging below him. He cast his fall loose, and bowed away with all his might. Shortly Kennedy's head and shoulders rose above the level of the sill, and then he again secured the rope. Tossing the end to the officer, he had him inside in a jiffy.

"Now don't talk," said he, stopping Kennedy as he was about to speak. "We are in danger of being interrupted at any moment. Somebody has just entered the house. Let's put things as we found them, and get out like a flash."

Without another word the officer assisted him to haul in the boom, and close the shutter. Then they passed out, and he locked the door, and followed Pete over the fence. When they reached the street, he looked up at the front of the house. Not a gleam of light was visible.

"They've got reasons for keeping dark," said Pete.

"By the Neck of the Sacred Emu!" snorted

Kennedy, "I should say they had! Pete, did you know there was a cave in the cliff?"

"I suspected it."

"Do you know what it contains?"

"No."

"A fortune in smuggled goods! Twenty-five thousand dollars worth of dope, at least!"

"You're in luck, cap."

"You're right! And so are you."

"We'll see. But I shouldn't wonder if there were more there to-morrow night."

"What do you mean? Jumping Jehoshaphat! What a fool I am! I see it at last! That's part of the dope to be sold to the Portland syndicate, and of course the run to-morrow night will end in that cave, and the stuff will be landed on the shore in front of it! Pete, you're worth the whole force!"

"Now, don't make any mistake, Cap. YOU discovered the cave yourself. I did not show it to you. And the collector, or major, or anybody else must not think so."

"I understand," said Kennedy vaguely. Then he burst out: "No! I'll be jiggered if I do, but it's all right, if you say so. I tumbled over the cliff, and fell into it if you wish."

"It won't be necessary to make any such violently improbable explanation as that, I hope," returned Captain Pete, smiling. "Do you think the cargo will be landed there?"

"Of course! To a dead moral certainty. All

we've got to do is to watch the *cache*. Whew! There'll be seventy-five thousand dollars worth of contraband goods in there to-morrow night. The biggest operation ever made in the history of smuggling! What a haul! All the main men of the ring will be in the neighborhood too, and we'll nab the whole outfit. Hurrah for the collector! Pete, it's all your doing whether you take the credit for it, or not."

"Not entirely," said Pete. "But I want the collector to succeed in his plans."

"If he don't, it won't be your fault! Here we are at the house, and it's just nine o'clock."

The collector and major both looked impatient as the officer and the boy came into the library again, but before the chief uttered the words which were on his lips, Kennedy held up his hand for silence:

"I have made a wonderfully fortunate discovery while we were away that alters our plans, and makes the rest of this matter plain sailing."

The two men leaped to their feet, and exclaimed simultaneously:

"What is it?"

Then in the plainest and most straightforward manner Kennedy told them of the cave in the cliff below Ben's house, and its contents:

"We all knew," said he, "or at least suspected that some *cache* existed on the American side of the line, but who could have imagined that it was

in Port Townsend itself, and contained such an enormous amount of goods!"

"Wonderful, truly," observed the collector thoughtfully. "And a marvelous stroke of good luck that you should have stumbled on it accidentally just in the nick of time." He gazed searchingly at Pete as he spoke, and the boy seemed uneasy under his glance. Then he continued speculatively: "Of course, there can be no doubt this is the spot where Cloon intends to land his last cargo. He's just the man to put all his eggs in one basket. But we must not forget that he is also apt to watch that basket pretty closely. Well, that settles it! That beach must be under the eye of one of us four—for I suppose you are with us Pete—from now until we make the capture."

He leaned back in his chair, and drew a long breath of relief. The perplexity and anxiety that had lined his face had fallen away, and Pete, watching him, thought he would turn traitor a dozen times for the delight he experienced in extricating this noble old man from his trouble. Now Major Fisher spoke:

"Captain Kennedy, how many men will come with the dope? And how do you suppose they will land it?"

"Three men, all Americans, and a fighting lot," replied the captain with an exultant face as if he rather liked the prospect. "They'll probably run right in on the beach, for it will be low tide to-mor-

row night, and carry the cases to the base of the cliff below the cave. They've got a derrick in it for hoisting heavy weights and could take care of five tons of dope, and stow it away in an hour."

"Very well," said the major. "Now collector, Cloon will be there himself, of course. Do you suppose that he will have anybody with him?"

"Aylward certainly," was the answer. "And probably one or two more. You know this is a matter of great importance to them, and the principals who are in the vicinity will certainly be on hand."

"Then," remarked Major Fisher, "that will make six men at least, and possibly eight or ten, that we four will have to deal with. Can we attend to so many? And we must remember that they will all be desperate. This is no common venture with them, and they will fight."

"Yes, they'll fight fast enough," said Kennedy. "But we would have the advantage of the surprise. But I expect," he added, "that we'd have to kill a few of them before they'd give in."

"No, that won't do!" It was the collector who spoke. "We must capture them alive, and convict them of their crimes."

"I believe you're right, sir," acknowledged Kennedy, regretfully. "It seems a pity, doesn't it?"

This naive remark of the gallant captain made them all laugh, and then the collector continued:

"We must take no chances. It is too important to me. I think I shall use the United States troops

to make the capture. You know Major Burt at the fort, is an especial friend of mine. If I ask him he will give me a detachment of men. I can station a file on each side of the cave, on the beach, and the smugglers will be hemmed in as soon as they put foot on shore."

"Yes," said the major, "and one or two of us may as well be on hand to capture that house on the cliff with the hoist as soon as the general attack is made. There will perhaps be some of them in there ready to go down to the cave."

"Then," suggested Pete, who had been an interested listener, but now spoke for the first time, "perhaps it would be a good idea if a man were out in a boat about that time, and able to cover them with a Winchester if they tried to get away by water in the craft they arrived in."

"A capital hint, Pete," said the collector, patting the boy on the shoulder. "I begin to think I should not have got through this thing successfully if I hadn't called you in. We'll do that."

"If we follow this plan then," said the major, "and you call in the aid of Burt, which I think very wise, I don't see how we can fail to catch them. Are you sure your man in Victoria will notify you of the start, Kennedy?"

"If Jimmy is alive he'll send me the wire on time," returned the captain, confidently. "There won't be any failure on his part."

"Even if there is," remarked the collector, "we

are independent of him; thanks to your discovery of the cave. If we watch that we're bound to nab them in the end. You're certain it will take place to-morrow?"

"It must, on account of the tide," returned the officer. "The long run out is just right for them to land to-morrow night. If they waited another day, they couldn't beach their boat safely, for the shingle is too steep close in shore."

"That's so," confirmed Pete.

"Then," resumed the old chief, "I don't see but that we are about through with our consultation. Who will watch the house above the cave to-night?"

"I'll take Dope with me, and camp out there until morning," said Pete.

The collector seemed struck by the boy's ready answer, and regarded him contemplatively once more. Then he replied:

"Well, that's handy. You're sure it won't conflict with any other duties you have on hand?"

"No, sir," replied the boy demurely, "not at all."

"I'll go along with you, Pete," offered Kennedy.

"No, I thank you, sir. It won't be necessary."

"But if anything occurs, you may want to communicate with us," suggested Major Fisher.

"I'll send Dope with a note."

"Oh yes, that wonderful dog of his!" grumbled Kennedy. "He'd rather have him than a man."

"He's better than most men!" affirmed Pete.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

AS Captain Pete was leaving the room with the others the collector put his hand on his arm, and said:

"Wait a moment, Pete. You're in no hurry to go on sentry duty, and I should like to have your company for a little while."

So the major and Captain Kennedy went off together, and Pete was left alone with the chief of the customs. He did not feel quite easy in his mind, for he suspected that the old man had fathomed the secret that bound him to Andrews. However, there seemed to be no help for him, and he had to accept the ordeal of the coming interview.

"Draw your chair up to the fireplace," began the collector. "I feel like having a comfortable chat with you. Do you remember the fable of the lion and the mouse? It keeps coming into my mind to-night. Let me see, how long ago is it since you first came to Port Townsend, after you and your father, and Tom Fisher found that opium in Dogfish Pass?"

"It is almost two years, sir," answered Pete, beginning to be affected by the tone of the collector's reminiscences.

"Yes, nearly two years. I begin to think I was

a lucky man to gain your good will at that time, Pete, altho' it seems funny that such an insignificant little shaver as you were then should have become so important a factor in my life as you have proved to be to-night."

Pete writhed uneasily under this, and burst out: "This is all nonsense you know, dear Mr. Hogan, and you are exaggerating too much, not my good will, but my services to you."

"No, Pete, I do not exaggerate, and you are perfectly aware of it. I am not so ignorant as you think. I know, for instance, why Mr. Andrews is out here from Washington, and that he is not examining land for investment. With that knowledge, it is easy for me to divine in what capacity you are really working for him. I know too, that he believes me to be a dishonest official. So I can easily estimate the importance of your friendship to me—and its possible cost to your own interests. Pete, you must not be false to Andrews, however much you may desire to aid me. Now this pretended sudden discovery of the smugglers' cave in the cliff to-night? Of course it was you who indicated its existence to Captain Kennedy in order to help me. But I hope it was your own secret, and not Andrews'?"

The collector paused, and our hero found himself fairly rounded up. So he made the best of it, and acknowledged the truth:

"I have no right to tell you all I know, sir, and I

am sure you don't want me to. You seem to have all the information that is necessary, and I wonder how you came by it."

"An old army friend of mine in the Treasury department believes in my honor, and wrote to put me on my guard," said the collector simply.

"I am glad you know it, sir," rejoined Pete. "It has made me feel mean and uncomfortable."

"Yes, I saw your attitude in the matter, and friendship to me from the first," was the reply. "I need not tell you, Pete, how keenly I appreciate your loyalty. And it has made it possible for me to succeed in my plan for vindicating my official honor. The question to be considered now is, however, whether your friendship to me is not interfering with your relations to Mr. Andrews. That must not be, and I am inclined to think that it will be better for you to withdraw from our operations altogether. Thanks to the disclosure of the existence of the cave we can get along perfectly well without your further assistance. What do you say? Will you drop out?"

"I'd rather think of some other way, sir, if it is possible. I wish I could bring you and Andrews together, and make him see you in the true light."

"That's impossible. There isn't time to remove the prejudice from his mind before the capture of Cloon and his confederates. I must have the credit of that arrest at all costs, for only by such a stroke

can I reinstate myself in the estimation of the department in Washington."

"Yes, sir, you're right! That is more important than all else," agreed Pete heartily.

The collector reached over, and put his arm about the boy's shoulders:

"My lad," said he, "if I had a son he couldn't be any more loyal and true than you are."

Pete did not reply for at that moment he heard a sudden tumult of female voices in the hall, and the next moment the library door was thrown wide open, and Mrs. Hogan accompanied by her elder daughter and another young lady came precipitately into the room. Pete caught a glance of the face of the stranger even before Mrs. Hogan had a chance to speak, and started hurriedly forward, and then drew back in confusion.

It was Grace!

Amid delighted exclamations of welcome her father listened to the explanations of how she had arrived unexpectedly on an earlier boat. In a moment the collector recollected Pete, and motioned him to come forward. The lad's heart was beating violently, and his head was in a whirl, but he managed to present at least the appearance of self-possession as he stood forth.

"Grace," said the chief, "have you forgotten the little fisher boy from Waldron island, Captain Pete? This is he, altered in almost everything except his heart."

That organ gave an uncomfortable leap in Pete's breast, and while he saw a quick color rise to the girl's cheeks, he wished the collector understood the situation more clearly, and did not come so disagreeably close to blurting out facts before an audience unprepared to receive them with equanimity. Then SHE spoke, and as is the rule in such cases, she exhibited more self-control than the lad. It must be acknowledged that her pulses were beating rapidly at the unexpected encounter with this manly young fellow whom she had left two years ago a mere boy, but in whom her feminine heart had discerned possibilities that caused his image to rise frequently before her mind during her long absence.

"I have not forgotten you, Captain Pete."

Pete felt that the voice had the old quality of girlish sincerity in its silvery tone, but there was a new womanliness added to an unforeseen distinction of mien, which appalled the ordinarily self-confident youth with a sense of her superiority. But only for a moment. He fortified his soul with the thought that he had proved himself superior to circumstances, and answered her as simply as she had spoken:

"I am glad, Miss Grace. I have always felt you one of the first friends I gained in the new world I entered when I left home."

She nodded at him brightly, and turned again to her father and mother. The boy, perfectly content,

watched her with delight and noted the changes time had wrought in her manner and appearance. She had grown up, he thought. There was a sweet serenity in her pose and bearing that suited the full, flowing lines of her figure. Her oldtime vivacity was toned into a gracious sprightliness that Pete thought the most charming demeanor on earth.

He aroused himself from his blissful occupation as the clock struck ten, and recollected that other and more prosaic matters demanded his attention. The collector accompanied him to the hall door, and caressed Dope's head as he said a last few words:

"Pete, let me once more warn you to be circumspect. Andrews is a very acute man—or he wouldn't have been sent on this mission—and you must not try to pull the wool over his eyes. He'll detect you, and that would be bad for you, and me as well. Thank God this situation will be over to-morrow, and there will be no more need of secrecy or maneuvering, two things I heartily abominate. If you can, come up to the house to-morrow at noon. If there are any new developments, you shall know them then. Good-night, my dear boy, and God bless you for your sympathy and aid."

Pete called Dope, and set off at a rapid pace for the clump of whortleberry bushes which was to be the scene of his vigil. He wanted to be alone under the stars, and think. He felt a crisis approaching in his affairs that was nearly as momentous as

that which confronted the collector. He reached his station, and settled down with one hand on Dope's neck, and his eyes keenly alert.

"Grace has come home," his heart kept singing, and he found it difficult to array the facts of the last few hours logically as was his mental habit. But he finally subdued himself, and got around to it:

"In the first place," he thought, "altho' it's awkward on one side of it, I am awfully glad that the collector knows who Andrews is, and that I'm helping in his work. It's a little rough on Andrews, but he's the one who can stand it the best. Anyhow, the end we all have in view is the capture of the smugglers, and I can't see that it makes any difference to the United States whether the deed is accomplished through the collector, or through Mr. Andrews. And it is of great significance to Mr. Hogan, and possibly to Pete Graignic. I must be honest enough to acknowledge that. Although I am very much attached to the grand old chief of the customs, I am working for my own hand, and to advance my chances for Grace. But what of it? It's all fair! Well, I believe from the way he spoke and acted to-night that he might not consider me unworthy if nobody else stood in the way. Will my Indian mother be a bar to my ambition? I don't think it fair that an upright life should be blighted, even if my dear mother is an Indian. I inherited the qualities that have so far

made me successful from her as well as my father. At any rate, come what will, I'll not be ashamed of or disown her. She's my mother, and as father said she is a chieftain's daughter, and has royal blood in her veins. . . .

"Now about Andrews! It seems to me there is a collision liable to occur between him, and the collector at the last moment. And that might spoil everything, and even result in the escape of the smugglers! I presume Andrews will know as well as Captain Kennedy when the contraband cargo leaves Victoria, and he will take measures to capture it on its arrival in United States territory. It's probable too, that he will select the beach in front of the cave to make the assault on Cloon and his men. I must have a talk with him and try to find out his intentions. Then if a collision which would endanger the whole affair appears unavoidable, what can I do? That's a pretty hard problem to figure out. If I could put him on the collector's plans in the same manner that I did Captain Kennedy on to the cave? By George! That idea is worth considering! But what a situation it puts me in. Here I am deceiving both, and playing the part of a scheming Machiavelli. It certainly wouldn't look nice unless the observer happened to be acquainted with my motives. Well, I'm in for it, and must let circumstances direct me, and do the best I can. Dear Grace, how sweet and soft and bright she looked!"

Pete's watch was without incident. No one came to the house, and no one emerged from it. The boy argued from this that Cloon had all his plans laid, and did not consider it essential to give any more orders, or disturb existing arrangements. So just before daybreak, he and Dope walked down to the lower town. The sun was just beginning to paint the skies pink and golden as he reached Water street, and instead of going into the hotel, he passed on to the wharf with the intention of seeing the sun rise. He went to the end of the quay, and sat on a pile of cable with the fresh sea breeze blowing in his face. Not a soul was astir, and he had the beauty of the morning to himself. A freshness of sensation filled his being, born of the late vigil, and the purity of the bracing air. With the old habitude of the fisher boy his eye swept the horizon, and in a moment he made a discovery that interested him. There were two vessels coming into port. One of them, the smaller, was apparently a steam launch, while the other was a craft of some size. He straightened up, and gazed with interest. A few minutes brought them in clear view, and then he perceived each flew the revenue flag. As they swept up, he wondered idly where they would land, and then saw that they were heading for the very pier he stood upon. When the leader, which was a beautiful little steam schooner of five or six hundred tons, rounded gracefully into the head of the dock, Pete recognized in the officer that stood

on the quarter deck, his old friend Captain Brady, who had brought him with Tom and Major Fisher from Friday Harbor with the smuggled opium they had found in Dog-fish Pass. Then he turned to the trim little launch which had now ranged alongside, and he was greeted with a delighted roar from Lieutenant Higgins, the old martinet who had also figured in the Dog-fish Pass incident.

When the lieutenant called out:

"Come aboard, Captain Pete, I want to shake hands with you," Captain Brady looked up and recognized our hero. He walked to the side, and reached over the rail to shake hands. Then the lad joined the lieutenant:

"This is an improvement on the '*Black Pup*,' Pete," said the latter, with a wave of his hand to indicate that he meant the boat beneath their feet.

"Yes, sir!" answered Pete, enthusiastically, as he scanned her lines. "She's new, isn't she?"

"Only turned out of Moran's yard a month ago. She can beat 16 knots, has a rapid fire gun, and is as seaworthy as a cruiser. The Lord help the smuggler I get after now!"

They continued talking, although the last remark of the lieutenant had given Pete food for reflection. After the boy had learned that the vessels had come into Port Townsend for supplies, he walked slowly to the hotel, and turned in, leaving directions at the desk that he should be called at 10 a. m.

Captain Pete's nap was destined to be the last

one he took in ease and comfort for some time. In order to better explain how the circumstances so affecting him came about, it will now be necessary for the reader to be present at an interview which took place in the freight shed on the wharf at which the *Bonito* was being laden. In a dingy little apartment bulkheaded off in the middle of this building, where goods were piled high on all sides, three people were gathered. A dimly flaring lantern stood on the rough table, and two men sat by it, one on a chair, and the other balancing himself on an up-turned box. The third, an Oriental by his dress, was speaking, and in spite of his costume his English was grammatical and well chosen.

"I have succeeded in carrying out your instructions in every particular, Mr. Cloon," said Ah Wong, "although your requirements have been complained of as somewhat unusual. The amount is very large, and your demand that it be paid here in gold instead of in Portland bank drafts as ordinarily was resisted for some time. However, it is all right now, and the money is on hand. I will turn it over to you immediately on receipt of the opium on United States territory."

Cloon passed his hand across his lofty forehead as though to wipe away the wrinkles, and answered:

"Yes, Ah Wong, you seem to have arranged everything as it should be. The run will be made to-night, and the dope landed on the beach in front of a *cache* that we possess in the cliff. You may

leave it there safely, or bring it into town as you deem best. The cash you must put in my hand to-night, after the delivery. That is all. Take the alleyway as you go out, and be careful not to attract attention. I feel as if strange eyes were about. Show him the way, Sam. And Ah Wong, be where I can communicate with you at any moment, for I may change my plans suddenly and desire to let you know!"

Aylward arose from the box, and the Mongolian followed him into an alley between the piles of freight. When they had passed out of sight, the lawyer arose, and paced the cell-like room with impatient strides. His face was troubled, and in a moment his disturbed thoughts found vent in speech.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

“THIS is the biggest battle of my life,” said Cloon, “and I’ve got to fight it all alone. It’s not only against the United States, but against everybody. I must play a lone hand to win out. Even Aylward must be thrown overboard, and Captain Anton Madeira is the sole one who must know my plans, and he only a part. Luckily he is as unscrupulous as—well, as I am myself. I can depend on him if I show him enough money ahead. Some people would call it ‘providential’ that I discovered in time who Andrews is and was able to filch his private memorandum book, and master its contents and replace it without his knowledge. But Joe Cloon is as hard to beat as Arthur Jordan was, and Andrews will find it out. . . .

“Most players would lay down their hand, and abandon the game! Once clear of these complications, and unsuspected in another quarter of the world, I’ll be as free as air and have wealth to make myself a power in any community. But all that is to consider hereafter. Now I must keep to the matter in hand. The collector has awakened from his sleep too, and he and Kennedy, and Fisher propose to trap Joe Cloon. Ha, ha! Not so easily! I am no vulgar, thick-headed marauder playing for

small stakes. They shall have notice of the departure of the great cargo of dope from Victoria, to-night, as they arranged, and so shall Andrews. But—they will be surprised when they make the arrests on the beach at the foot of the cave, to find only one-third of the opium and that I am missing. I'm sorry to lose what's in the *cache*. . . .

"Bartels will, according to my latest secret instructions, bring the Portland consignment to Ike Bandman on San Juan, and it will be baled in hay and forwarded on the tug Success. It will arrive at this wharf by dusk to-night, and be safe in this freight shed before nine o'clock. If the revenue men catch on, it will be by accident, for they are all watching the cave. . . . Then I'll turn it over to Ah Wong, and finger the money. Next Anton Madeira, and the *Bonito* come in. He must anchor in the stream this afternoon, and when we're ready, we'll slip the cable and be off. . . . It was lucky I was able to steal the clearance, and other papers from the drunken captain of the *Norway*, because it won't be safe to get out regular papers for the *Bonito*. Bah! We'll change her name to the *Norway* as soon as we're abreast of Cape Flattery, and who'll know the difference at the next port? They're both the same rig, and laden alike. . . . My hands will be full to-day. . . . And first, I must get rid of Aylward. He's in my way. Besides, he's too smart to have alongside of me. He'd smell something. I'll send him up to Ben's and let

him remain there ready to be captured by the revenue people to-night. Then I'll have full swing. . . . What about that boy Pete Graignic? I have taken a strange fancy to him, and the way he has played with me makes it all the stronger. What a comrade he'd be if he were on my side! He must be mine. By Jove! I believe I'm actually fond of him. Well, I never had anybody in my life to be fond of before, and I suppose it's a weakness. . . . Weaknesses are dangerous at this time."

At this point of the conspirator's soliloquy Sam Aylward re-entered the apartment. He stood silently, and met Cloon's thoughtful gaze. This lasted a moment, and then his chief spoke:

"Sam, I have reason to believe that it would be healthier for you if you were not so conspicuous about the city for the next few hours."

Aylward looked uneasy, and his aquiline, Jewish features became suddenly whiter and sharper. But there was a steady glow in his dark eyes as he shrugged his shoulders slightly, and said:

"Why?"

"Kennedy is here from Victoria, and he knows you by sight though not by name. It might be unfortunate for our plans if you attracted his attention, and he should put a watch on you just at this time. I think he has got wind of something, and has come across from British Columbia to make the collector aware of it."

The Oriental eyes widened, and then the lids half closed, giving an expression of sinister alertness to the hawk like profile. The innate man was disclosed. He was a fitting ally to Cloon and as remorseless when his fear or cupidity were aroused:

"Is it so! Captain Kennedy had better not follow me too closely. I have an old account to settle with him."

The feline snarl in his voice as he said this brought a smile to Cloon's face which was fully as unpleasant in character:

"Yes," he answered, "I know. Perhaps you may have an opportunity to safely settle some of your grudges before many hours are passed. But for the present don't you think it would be prudent and sensible to keep out of the way of observation? There is nothing pressing that I cannot attend to myself until after the landing. You had better *cache* yourself at Ben's."

"I don't like being stowed away when there is so much going on!"

"But it's better," urged Cloon with a faint suggestion of authority in his even voice that brought a rebellious look to the Jew's eyes. "We must not suffer from any recklessness at this stage of the game. There is too much at stake."

A somber flash from the cruel, black eyes acknowledged the justice of this reasoning, and Aylward submitted his will to that of his superior:

"I suppose you're right. I'll do it, tho' it's hard."

"You'd better take a cab," counselled Cloon.

"You're apt to be seen if you walk."

"All right," responded Sam, taking his departure.

The lawyer watched his withdrawal in silence, and as the retiring footsteps ceased to sound on his ear, he again took up his interrupted monologue:

"Sam has to be driven with a light rein. He's a dangerous fellow, and I couldn't hold him down if he had as much brains as he has determination and energy. But his career will be cut short to-night when the revenue men get hold of him. He'll make a good fight, tho', and probably kill some of them before they subdue him. . . . Well, that's nothing to me. I must attend to my own interests. Now to see Captain Anton, and prepare him for the part he is to play in the events of the next twenty-four hours. I must be careful not to allow him to know too much either, or he will be as ready to bite as Sam. I may have to give him a lesson. He already feels himself too important. . . . This is a complicated skein I am unwinding, and I cannot afford to make any tangles. They would be fatal."

He arose, and went to the telephone in the corner of the room, taking down the ear-cup:

"Give me the barque *Bonito*," he said to the central. "Yes, there is a 'phone on board. I don't know the number. Look it up." Presently the answering bell tinkled.

"Is that you, Captain Anton? Can you get away? All right, then come to the old office in the freight shed. It is I, Cloon, and I want to see you on business."

He hung up the cup and resumed his seat with his face turned expectantly towards the door. The interval was not long, and presently the man whom Pete had seen going aboard the *Bonito* with Aylward came into the apartment. He was a lithe, powerful looking fellow with a face that had infinite possibilities of evil legibly inscribed on its swarthy lines. His eyes were beady and glittering, and he fixed them on Cloon with an intensity and meaning that might have proved embarrassing to a man with less nerve than the burly conspirator.

"What is it, now, Señor Cloon?" he said. "I always like to be called to a meeting with *you*. You are a man who invariably has business of importance on hand, and it is often profitable to your friends. And I am one you know, thro' thick and thin, in fair weather or foul."

"Sit down, captain," said Cloon, pointing to the box. "Yes, I have business on hand as usual, and of some gravity. There's money in it, of course. Good money and sure for both of us. You and I don't work otherwise."

"Good! Señor," replied the Spaniard, his eyes glittering. "I am ready. Give your orders."

"How soon will you have your cargo stowed, and be ready for sea?"

"Eight bells this afternoon. What you call four o'clock."

"Good. Haul out into the stream, as soon as the hatches are closed and lie by a single anchor. Have your sails bent, and all your running rigging overhauled so you can slip cable, and be off at a moment's notice. Are we going to have any wind this afternoon?"

"Plenty, señor. A northeast gale is coming up, and I could get from my moorings with its help as quickly as a sea bird rises from the wave. You mean business, and I like it. How about my clearance papers?"

"Don't apply for them to-day. Do your work so cleverly that no one will suspect you want to sail before to-morrow. But shortly after midnight be prepared to make a flying start. How about your crew?"

"I will attend to that, señor. I have four old hands, and a steward that have been with me before. They will do as I say. I need three more, and I will shanghai them from among the longshoremen who are loading the *Bonito*. Once I get them on blue water I will make them 'turn to,' or they will be sorry."

The conspirator smiled somberly. He knew the capabilities of the man before him, and if he had been subject to such emotions would have felt pity for the poor fellows who were to be abducted.

But no such sentiment touched his iron heart, and he answered:

"All right. But be careful they don't escape and kick up a row."

It was the captain's turn to smile, and he did so in a cruel, sinister way that boded ill for the victims he anticipated holding at his mercy:

"Ah! Señor Cloon, you do not know Captain Anton yet! I will put the men under hatches in the run, and knock them in the head if they squeal. Besides, who could hear them thro' the ship's skin? It is easy. I will send them down to work there, and then put on the hatches, and it is finished. They cannot escape."

"You understand your business, don't you?" said the lawyer, with something of admiration as the rascal so coolly developed his scheme for depriving innocent men of their liberty. "I don't believe they'll get away from you."

"But," said the captain. "About the papers! If we go to sea to-night, señor, I must have some papers for the *Bonito*. Otherwise we could not go into any port without trouble. It would mean inquiry, and arrest. No prison for me, señor!"

"Do not alarm yourself, captain," returned the chief conspirator. "I understand the matter fully, and am no more anxious to look out upon the world thro' gratings than you are. I will bring off the necessary documents with me when I come aboard."

I suppose you have no objection to changing the name of the vessel when she is out of sight of land in case another title should suit her better, have you?"

The eyes of the two lawless men met, and the lines of the sallow face of the Spaniard relaxed into a grim smile:

"You are smart, señor. It is pleasure to have to do with you, and we shall enjoy our voyage."

"By the way," added the lawyer with a sudden thought. "I may want to do some shanghaiing on my own account. Can you take care of a young man if I get him on board the ship? He is clever, and will fight if he finds it necessary."

"Send him along," answered the captain laconically. "He won't fight after I get hold of him."

"But he must not be injured—seriously," interposed Cloon.

"That makes the job more difficult, but I will attend to him, señor. Is it a friend of yours that you want to take on a sea voyage for his health?"

"He's a lad I need in my business," returned Cloon shortly. "And he must not be hurt."

"I will handle him with the featherduster, señor," was the laughing reply.

"Well," resumed Cloon, "everything is looked out for and understood except money matters. These must be settled so that all shall be above board. I will give you ten thousand dollars, and the ship, which I have chartered, and pay all expenses of the

voyage, and you are to land me in Sidney, Australia. Is it right?"

"Wait a bit, señor," said the Spaniard, whose eyes now flashed with greed. "Leaving this port without papers will be stealing the ship. If that is done, the barque will be mine anyway, and therefore not yours to 'give.' That is no part of your payment. But stealing a ship is barratry, and what we are about to do is altogether like piracy. I do not do this of my own will, but at your instigation. It must be well paid, or the *Bonito* does not go. You must pay me, señor, money down, twenty thousand dollars before I hoist a sail."

In Captain Anton Madeira's previous transactions with Cloon, there had never arisen any difference between them. Cloon was on principle courteous and considerate in his treatment of the tools he was obliged to employ in the course of his risky occupations. Therefore the Spaniard was not aware of the side of the lawyer's character he was now about to view. In fact, he had so far been rather inclined to despise Cloon, as the violent ruffian always is disposed to underrate those who work habitually through different methods. He was totally surprised therefore when Cloon leaped from his chair, and gripped him by his throat. The Spaniard instinctively reached for his knife. But Cloon's great hand closed on his neck with so fell a clutch that before he could grasp it, his trembling fingers were paralyzed and had lost their strength.

His swarthy face became muddy white in color, and inarticulate gurglings for mercy came faintly from his open mouth. The conspirator's face gazed down upon him with an expression so satanic that half unconscious as he was he shivered with fear. In that supreme moment the weaker villain who was a cur at bottom, recognized his master, and cringed in his very soul like a beaten spaniel.

After a few seconds, which seemed centuries each to Captain Anton, Cloon opened his hand. The Spaniard dropped limply to his former seat on the box and gazed at his conqueror with a look in which all the self-confidence had departed, and only desire to conciliate remained. Joe Cloon quietly resumed his chair, and watched him immutably. The Spaniard gradually recovered his strength. Finally he straightened up, and turned to meet the lawyer's gaze. Cloon's expression was inscrutable. The stern lines of his face showed no trace of the recent disturbance, and he met the Spaniard's eye as calmly as if he had not choked him nearly to death an instant before. But his calmness did not lull Madeira into a sense of security. He, being a ruffian of physical rather than moral hardihood, was completely cowed. Manhood had deserted him and although he had killed men in combat, and had a reputation among those who knew him for reckless daring, he could now hardly control his nerves as he faced the man who had ignored his weapon,

and shown him his utter helplessness in a hand to hand struggle:

"Señor," he said in a husky voice, "why do you treat your friend and servant so? I do not deserve it."

"You Spanish dog," said Cloon in his usual even tones. "You needed a lesson, and you have got it. See that you do not forget. You are my man. I will hang you if you do not obey me. Provided I do not kill you with my own hands first. Do you think you can take advantage of my necessities to overreach me in a bargain? Ten thousand dollars you will get for carrying me where I will on the *Bonito*, and do not think that you will have the chance to get the upper hand on board the ship where you believe you will have me in your power. The first thought of the kind that enters your treacherous heart will be the signal for your death. Do you understand me?"

"Yes, señor." The humbled ruffian spoke low and sullenly, but there was a satisfactory sincerity in his voice that made Cloon content with his victory. He arose, and went to a cupboard from which he brought a decanter and a glass. He filled the latter, and gave it to the captain to drink, saying in a more genial way:

"There, put that down you. It will give you heart. Then forget that you tried to bully Joe Cloon. Now, do you feel better?"

The captain smiled deprecatingly, and murmured:

"Yes, señor." Then he arose, and stood before the superior villain: "I will obey you, señor," he said. "You are my master, and the first man I have ever called so."

Joe smiled, and held out his formidable hand in amity. The other took it humbly, and the lawyer said:

"That is right, Anton. Now we shall have no more trouble. You will lose nothing by this, for of my own accord I will raise the price of your services to fifteen thousand dollars. Serve me well, and you will find a liberal and kind master. Go now, and attend to the tasks I have given you."

The Spaniard crept from the room hat in hand.

Cloon gazed after him meditatively:

"I shall have no further trouble with him," he said. "He is thoroughly beaten. Now I'll write a note to Captain Pete, and try to wile him on board the *Bonito* this afternoon. I can leave it at the hotel as I go to breakfast. No, I'll write it at the hotel, and think it out as I walk."

He replaced the decanter, and glass, took up his hat, and left the room.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

PETE, as sound as one of the Seven Sleepers, and entirely unaware of the cloud that lowered over his head, did not even get his much needed rest out. At half-past nine Andrews knocked sharply at his chamber door, and was at once admitted by the lad. Pete gulped two or three tremendous yawns, and became wide enough awake to take his customary interest in mundane affairs. Andrews' manner betrayed unusual animation.

"I know you need sleep, Pete," said he, "and I am sorry to disturb you so soon, but the corn is ripe. The great run will be made to-night! The trap must be sprung in the very act. My plans are laid, but there remains much to look after in the way of detail, and I may need your help. Did you discover anything last night? No, I did not suppose you would, but Sam Aylward went up this morning, and is there now. I don't know why. There is another man watching the house from the street, and doing it cleverly. I can't make out who he is acting for." Pete thought of Captain Kennedy, but did not open his lips. "He may be one of Cloon's men, but he doesn't look it. Now about Cloon! He has been in the warehouse on the Queen's dock ever since six this morning. He must have business of import-

ance there. Could you not saunter down after breakfast, and see what you can discover? He hasn't the slightest suspicion. When I returned last night, he had been in my room half an hour waiting to have a chat. If I did not know what a deep-dyed scoundrel the man is, I should be inclined to like him. Oh! he had Aylward closeted with him in the warehouse—which, by the way, he holds the lease of—for the Jew went in a cab from there to Blue Shirt's. And Ah Wong of Seatt'le was in there too—the warehouse, I mean—this morning. In fact, it seems to be headquarters for the plotters."

As our hero passed out of the breakfast room after his meal the clerk handed him a note saying Lawyer Cloon had just left it. Pete opened it in some surprise, and read:

Dear Pete,

Captain Madeira, of the Bonito, has asked me to lunch with him at two o'clock on board his vessel which lies at the Queen's wharf. He is a very interesting fellow, and has had as many strange adventures as Othello.

Knowing your interest in maritime men and things, I persuaded him to include you in the invitation. Be on hand punctually.

Yours,
JOE CLOON.

Andrews had gone to his room. Pete put the

letter in his pocket, and walked thoughtfully down the street. His perceptions were keen, as we know, and this note seemed to reek of treachery. It meant a trap. But why should Cloon nourish evil designs against him unless he had some knowledge of Andrews' mission? Suddenly it flashed across him! The lawyer intended to shanghai * him, and make him the companion of his voyage! The moment the idea entered his brain, he became convinced he was correct in his surmise. He recalled the favor the conspirator had shown him, and that he had even been on the verge of making outright proposals for his company.

Well, it was easy enough to foil the plotter now he saw through his design. He need not accept the invitation. But somehow this obvious way of settling the matter did not appeal to the lad. A spirit of dare-devil adventure, natural to his age, impelled him to beard the conspirator, and foil him with his own weapons of duplicity and adroitness. The more he pondered over the situation the more fascinating did it appear in this aspect. What was the danger, after all? Cloon would certainly be captured in the cave that night, and even if he—Pete—were detained on board the *Bonito* he was sure to be released when Cloon's misfortune became known.

"Nevertheless," thought Pete, it will be just as

* A term applied to the forcible abduction of sailors, which is frequently practised by ship captains in ports where they cannot readily hire a crew.

into ze States. Ze Scotchman was to wire Kennedy if it were put on board a launch named ze *Periwinkle*. Jimmy had been surprised and captured by ze smugglers while watching zem load the *Periwinkle*. Zey bound him, and took him on board for safety. He had succeeded in getting free a couple of hours after they had left Victoria, and had lowered himself to ze boat towing astern, and cut it adrift. He watched ze launch put in shore and himself made for a light a mile distant to ze norz'ard. He found it to be a lantern on ze wharf at Roche Harbor, a place he knew well. He started again to shadow ze smugglers, and knowing ze lay of ze land, soon located the *Periwinkle*, and discovered ze smugglers had removed ze dope to ze barn of a San Juan rancher named Bandman, and wiz his help were concealing it in bales of hay. Before daylight ze launch left and Jimmy made his way back to Roche Harbor puzzled what to do, for zere was no telegraphic communication wiz ze mainland. I zought," concluded Mr. Graignic, whose narrative we have condensed and clarified for the reader's benefit, "it was possible Jimmy's mishap might have put you people out of your reckoning, and ze best zing I could do was to come and tell you, leaving zee Scotchman to watch ze dope in Bandman's barn."

Pete listened to his father's tale with a sense of its importance that was imprinted on his face. To say that he was astounded at the news did not half

express his feelings. He realized at once that the fact of the shipment of the opium to Bandman on San Juan—which he made no doubt was the consignment to be delivered by Cloon to the Portland syndicate—was a new combination on the part of the astute conspirator calculated to upset their plans, and expose not only Andrews, but (which was of far more importance from Pete's point of view) the collector, to defeat. He had a dim suspicion that the lawyer had discovered the snares being laid for his feet, but after an instant's consideration he abandoned the idea as improbable. They had simply underrated the man's wonderful caution and sagacity.

"However," he reflected, "there still remains twenty-five thousand dollars worth of contraband goods in the cave which will be a portion of the lot delivered to Ah Wong. That would be sufficient to insure Cloon's presence when it was turned over to the representative of the syndicate. But this immense balance at Bandman's! What was to be done with that? For of course it would not remain in Bandman's barn any length of time, or be brought to the cave—which could not hold it baled in hay. At any rate, the collector must be apprised of this move.

"And," he concluded, "Andrews can find it out for himself! He don't confide in me, and anyhow, this is my news to do with as I like."

The perplexities that involved him seemed end-

less, but Pete's whole being arose to meet them. He was developing into a ready and daring man of action. He turned to his father who had been silently watching the boy's face.

"Father," he said, "your tidings are as important as you surmised, and they come at a critical moment, as the seizure of the leaders of the ring has been decided upon for this very night. I cannot foresee what difference this may make. But you must go at once to the collector, and tell him the story. I have other things to attend to. You had better start at once. He will be in his private office in the custom house."

The old sailor, who could take orders without question even from his son put on his hat without a word, and departed. Pete gazed after him, whistling softly as if his mind was preoccupied. Then he turned to the three longshoremen, who had finished their meal.

"Boys," he said, "can you fight?"

They regarded him in astonishment, but the gravity of his expression convinced them that he was in earnest. Then Joe stepped forward, and took his place as the leader of the three:

"We don't understand what you are getting at, sir, but if you are in trouble, and need our help, we'll try and do whatever fighting may be required. I think we will give a good account of ourselves."

"I can't explain the whole matter to you—" began Pete.

"It isn't needful!" interrupted the longshoreman. "I see it is serious, but we know, and believe in you. Give your orders, and we'll do what you say. Am I right, boys?"

"You bet!" said Con and Harry with a heartiness that left nothing to be desired.

Pride and gratitude showed plainly on Pete's face, and made thanks unnecessary:

"First," he said, "are you armed? Have you guns?"

They all looked embarrassed, and Joe said apologetically:

"Nary such a thing in the outfit. Won't a club do?"

"Not on this business," replied Pete. "Let me think a moment, and I'll try and tell you clearly what I want you to do. But you must not expect to understand why. And if your services come in play you will get a hundred dollars apiece."

"Never mind that, sir. Give your orders."

Pete reflected a moment, and then raised his head. Before he spoke he drew his check book from his pocket, and filled out a check with his fountain pen. This he handed to Joe, saying:

"I want you each to buy a good revolver—the regulation police Smith & Wesson will do. Load up in the shop. Then go to your work again on the *Bonito* prepared for whatever may happen. I am to be there at two o'clock to lunch with the captain and lawyer Cloon in the cabin. I suspect foul

play—the reason of which I cannot tell you now. I want you to be on hand without it's being known you are there in my behalf. If you see or hear anything queer, or if I call on you, you must come to my assistance. It probably will mean a scrimmage.”

Joe said calmly, but with deep determination:

“If there is a scrap, sir, I will twist that bloody dago's head off.”

Pete laughed, thoroughly satisfied from Joe's expression that he would be apt to execute his threat, and responded:

“Don't forget that you carry a gun, Joe. And above all, watch the big lawyer. He's the one to be most afraid of, both from brain and hand.”

Joe shook his head hopelessly:

“I don't 'savvy' it at all, sir,” he said. “I always supposed he was one of the nobs, and a dead game sport. But I reckon you know what you're about, and you may depend on us not to fail you. Come boys, we'll hunt a hardware store, and get the guns.”

They all went out, and Joe locked the door of the shack as carefully as if it had been filled with Klondike nuggets. Pete thought it judicious to separate from them at the corner, and he made his way directly to the warehouse. He did not expect to find out anything new, for he inferred from the note of invitation which the clerk had said was left personally, that the lawyer had gone. He passed in through the small door, and made his way towards

the other end—which extended far down the dock—through a narrow lane between the produce that filled the shed. He had never been in the building before, and it was only thro' the temporary absence of the watchman who had stepped across the alley to get a drink, that he was favored now. When therefore, he came to the little office in the middle where Cloon had his interview with Captain Madeira, he was both surprised and interested, for he had not suspected its existence. The lantern was still flaring on the table. Pete sat down in the chair, and took in his surroundings. Everything filled him with suspicion, but there was nothing tangible to lay hold of, and he at length reluctantly passed on. He emerged at the further door, and there was Joe Hanlon piling up the sacks of flour on the sling. Joe nodded significantly, and whispered:

“Con and Harry are stowing away small stores in the run.”

Pete consulted his watch, and found it was half-past eleven.

“I’ll report to Andrews at the hotel,” thought he, “and then go up to the collector’s as he said, at noon. I’d like to see father, but there’s no time, and I’ll have to put off visiting with him until tomorrow.”

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

WHEN Pete arrived Grace was the first person he encountered. She was sitting alone by the fire as our hero entered, but arose at once with the slightest flush on her cheek—or was it the fire gleam?—and said as she made her way to the door:

“I will call Papa.”

“Please don’t go!” said Pete. “I have not seen you for two years, and your father is here all the time. There is no hurry.”

He was strangely oblivious of the pressing importance of haste. But Grace was not aware of the gravity of impending events, and her own inclinations strongly urged her not to lose the opportunity of a chat with Captain Pete unhampered by the presence of others. She was anxious to study him, and see how far the boy had been father to the man. His mental attitude of awe to her personality pleased and amused her, and she was desirous of making him feel more at home. So, after a slight hesitation, she took her seat again.

“You have been very successful in life since I went away, Mr. Graignic,” she began.

Pete ignored the implied question, and answered with the same steadfast expression shining on his face that she remembered so vividly:

"You told your mother once in this very room that I was not '*mister* Graignic' but 'our friend, Captain Pete.' I recollect it as if it were yesterday. You pointed your beautiful finger at me, like that."

Grace's cheeks became crimson instead of pink, but she answered:

"You HAVE a memory! Why, that was centuries ago! Well, Captain Pete, I am very glad to know that your merit has been rewarded."

"The reward I have been working for, and which is as high above my deserts as the heavens are above the earth—"

There was a hasty step in the hall, the knob turned, and the collector entered the room. Grace did not know whether to be glad or sorry. Her father said hurriedly:

"Come into the library, Pete. Kennedy and Major Fisher are there with your father."

Pete came back to the exigencies of life, and with a lingering glance at the girl that completed his sentence, he followed the chief of the customs.

"I have enlisted your father in my cause," said the latter as they entered the library, "and explained the situation between Mr. Andrews and me. He agrees with me that you can't ride two horses at the same time, and his counsel is that you drop out of my arrangements. But he volunteers to take your place, and I have gratefully accepted his offer."

"I may consider myself discharged, then, I suppose," said our hero with a twinkle of amusement.

"I'll give you a character, if you demand it," rejoined the collector, smiling.

"Yes, my son, you must not play wiz Andrews the way you have been doing." The fisherman spoke decidedly.

The lad was taken aback by his father's tone, and saw at once that he strongly disapproved of our hero's attitude in regard to the Washington official. Perhaps too the fisherman thought Pete had used him to further his own purposes in sending him to the collector with his tidings instead of to Mr. Andrews, and it must be acknowledged that the affair looked disingenuous on the boy's part. On the other hand none of them knew how Pete felt toward Grace, and of the enormous stake he had in the outcome of the collector on his daughter's account.

"I am sorry you disapprove of my conduct, father," he said earnestly. "But I could not resist the temptation to assist Mr. Hogan."

"I will not say I blame you, Pete," responded his father. "It was a hard position. But do not make it any worse."

"All right, sir. Then I suppose I must leave you. Good-bye until to-morrow."

"I am going your way, Pete," said Kennedy, "and I'll accompany you."

This was what Pete had been cudgelling his

brains to bring about. He was anxious to tell Kennedy of Cloon's invitation to luncheon, which he had decided not to mention to the others. When they reached the street he produced the letter, and read it to the captain, explaining his distrust of the lawyer's intentions and the measures he had taken to balk him.

"Well, Pete," the gallant revenue man exclaimed. "You seem to be in it deeper than any of us. This is a dangerous piece of business, and I'm glad you told me. You may need help. I know something of this Captain Madeira, and he is as desperate and unscrupulous a villain as ever went unhung—which he is only doing temporarily. There is no need of your attending this lunch party of cutthroats so far as I can see. Why do you go?"

Pete laughed this prudent counsel from the reckless captain to scorn:

"Why, Cap." said he, "wild horses wouldn't keep you back from going just for the fun of it, if you stood in my shoes."

"Perhaps not, you young rascal, but I keep my sense for my friends, and my foolishness for myself."

"I'll go anyway," resumed Pete. "If I can make Cloon show his hand, it will be something gained, and Joe Hanlon and the boys will see that I don't come to harm."

"Very well," said the revenue man. "But I shall be down at three o'clock if you have not shown up at

the hotel, and if I don't find you all right, Cloon and Madeira will wish they had never been born. Does Andrews know?"

"No. And now that I have posted you I feel perfectly at ease. Good-bye, I'm off."

"Be careful, and don't get hurt!" anxiously cautioned the captain.

It was ten minutes before the appointed hour when Pete arrived at the *Bonito*. While he stood a moment hesitating before going aboard, the second mate swung himself on the dock, and said to Joe Hanlon:

"The captain says you are to go down in the run, and give those two chaps a hand. Cargo must be stowed, and the hatches on by eight bells. So bear a hand! I'll take the sling."

Joe looked surprised, and inclined to grumble:

"You're in a mighty hurry! But after all, I don't care where I work."

So saying, he resigned his place and stepped aboard. Scarcely had he disappeared down the companionway before Joe Cloon came out of the warehouse in company with the Spanish captain. He introduced Pete to him with a boisterous air of good fellowship, and they all went on board, Cloon asking:

"Where is your dog, Captain Pete? Why didn't you bring him along?"

Pete thought "he wants Dope, too," but answered readily that he had left the mastiff at the hotel, fear-

ing he might be in the way. They passed into the first cabin. A small hatch in the middle, partly underneath the table was open. Cloon looked at Captain Madeira inquiringly, and the latter replied as to a question:

"We eat to-day in the after cabin. Three men are at work down there in the 'run' stowing away the cabin supplies for the voyage."

Cloon smiled grimly, and said:

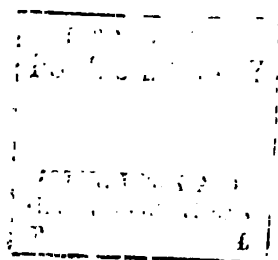
"Oh! that is the '*run*,' is it?"

Pete felt that there was some significance in the explanation and reply that he did not grasp, but he felt comforted to know that his reserves were so handy. In fact, as he passed the hatch he caught Joe gazing up from below with a reassuring expression on his honest phiz.

A table was already laid in the after cabin, and Captain Madeira took the chair at its head, and told the others to seat themselves, adding that the steward would be along in a moment. Pete took his place on the starboard or right-hand side, and the lawyer was opposite. The cabin was a spacious apartment about twenty feet long by fourteen wide. It did not fill the whole width of the ship, for there was a commodious state room on each side. The door of the one behind Cloon, and consequently opposite Pete was open, and he could see that it appeared to be newly furnished, and in a luxurious style unusual on sailing vessels. Silk hangings, a large mirror, and richly upholstered furniture made

it resemble the first class of accommodation of a Cunard steamer. He had hardly time to make these observations when Captain Madeira observed that there appeared to be a draught, and closed the door. There remained no doubt in Pete's mind that this was the quarters intended for the Chief of the Smugglers.

The burden of the conversation fell on Cloon, and he kept the ball in the air as if he had not a care on his mind. The topic he selected was the attractiveness of a sea-faring life, and he handled it with so much vivacity that Pete became interested in spite of the necessity he felt to be constantly on his guard. In the meantime the steward, a tall, sinister looking man with a long scar gleaming white through the swarthy skin of his cheek, had brought in a tureen of soup and put it before the captain, and now with napkin on arm deftly served the guests. Pete noted that he kept mainly on his side of the table, and wondered if it was intentional. On the whole he concluded the steward was a confederate, and ready at the proper moment to assist the designs against him. He could see through the open door into the first cabin, and one end of the open hatch was in his line of vision. He now observed, with the minuteness with which one notes trifles at a critical moment rather than any definite idea, that the hatch cover and the iron bar—which by fitting in sockets held the first in place—were both at the edge of the opening. As he looked, the steward came along





PETE LEAPT FROM HIS SEAT LIKE A WILDCAT.

from the pantry bearing a dish, and in passing gave the cover a slight push with his foot which sent it half-way across the open hatch. As the men below were working by lantern light it made no difference to them, and Pete himself did not suspect that the action was other than accidental.

The luncheon progressed until the salad was finally reached and still Cloon discoursed on the beauties of "a life on the ocean wave." Up to this time nothing had occurred to confirm Pete's suspicions, and he began to believe that after all he was mistaken. This frame of mind was fatal to his safety. He did not perceive that the steward had given the hatch cover another kick that nearly put it in its place. The next moment he stood behind Pete, and received a significant nod from Madeira. He went out again partly closing the door behind him. Then Pete heard a grating sound, and a slight clang of iron. When the scarred servitor of the captain returned, the hatch was closed and secured by the bar. Our hero was listening to Cloon, who had just said:

"You remember, Captain Pete, we once talked of taking a sea voyage together."

Pete's eye caught the closed hatch as his ear took in the ominous words, and he knew that the moment had come. As he darted his ready hand for his pistol it was caught by the steward from behind. The next instant he leapt from his seat like a wild cat, and struck his assailant full in the scarred

face with his own head, breaking the hold on his arm, and dashing the Spaniard senseless against the bulkhead. Again his fingers grasped the butt of his revolver, but before he could draw it he felt a sudden shock, a blinding light seemed to flash before his eyes, and he tottered and fell back sidewise on his chair. In the instant before he lost consciousness he was aware of a heavy pounding, and what seemed a dull explosion near by.

What had happened was this. At the same moment that the captain felled Pete with a blow on the head from a life preserver, Joe Hanlon and his mates had realized that they were trapped. Joe, who had the strength of a mad bull when he was enraged, seized a heavy case of canned goods and hurled it against the closed hatch with a force that splintered the oak hatch cover, and utterly demolished the goods. But the iron bar still held firmly. Then Joe discharged his pistol through the hatch in the vain hope that the bullet might find a billet in the body of the man who had ensnared them.

Cloon in the meantime, stepped lightly around the table saying to the Captain:

"See that your men in the run are secure!"

Then he raised Pete on his arm and carried him into the nearest state room. He parted his hair with his fingers, and anxiously felt the bleeding wound caused by the Spaniard's black jack:

"It's an ugly bump but the youngster's skull is not broken," he said to the captain.

"You struck hard, but I do not blame you. In another moment he would have had his gun out, and they say he shoots quick and straight. Now we'll put him in the bunk and you'd better slip a pair of irons on his wrists. He is clean grit, and would give us trouble yet if he had half a chance."

They deposited our hero in the captain's own bunk after Cloon had rinsed off the blood, and bound up his broken head with his handkerchief. Then the lawyer said:

"I have other important matters to attend to, and must be about them. Do not leave the vessel, Captain Anton, and on no pretext permit any one to enter either of these cabins. Those fellows you have shanghaied are making the devil's own racket, and one of them appears to have a gun. I'm off! Obey my orders implicitly, and be prepared any minute after dark to make a flying start. I'll come out in a small boat. Have a ladder over the side."

"Aye, aye," answered the Spaniard, "it shall be as you command, señor. Now I must look to my steward. He is hurt worse than the young man you are so careful of."

"He's less account," replied Cloon coolly, as he made his way out.

It was five minutes before three when Cloon left the barque, and he met Kennedy on Water street going in the direction of the Queen's dock. Though each knew who the other was

they were not acquainted. Kennedy thought:

"There he goes now! I wonder if he has got the best of Pete?"

Cloon said to himself with the habitual wariness of one at war with society:

"Can Pete have mentioned my invitation to Kennedy, and is his suspicion aroused? Bah! It's too late to worry, and Madeira will not allow him to investigate on board the *Bonito*. Now to see Ah Wong, and tell him the opium will be landed on Queen's dock baled in hay, at eight o'clock this evening."

Kennedy went straight to the *Bonito*, and not seeing Joe Hanlon who he knew, asked the second mate where he was. The reply informed him that Joe and his two partners were stowing goods in the run of the *Bonito*.

"Can I see them?" asked the revenue man.

"I guess so. Go on board."

Kennedy climbed over the bulwarks, and came to the companion way. He tried the knob, and found the door locked. He hammered loudly on the panel, and presently Captain Madeira opened the portal an inch or so—it still being secured by a chain—and peered through. He started when he beheld Kennedy, and said roughly:

"What do you want? I'm busy. You can't come in."

"I want to see the men at work in the run," said Kennedy eyeing the captain keenly, although he

smiled, and appeared to take no offense at the other's tone.

"They are through and gone an hour ago," said the captain, closing and bolting the door again.

"Oh!" said Kennedy to himself, "They are, are they? Then it's queer that second mate did not know it! I reckon it's just as well Pete told me he was going to lunch here. He and those longshoremen are confined in that cabin, and possibly hurt. I'll drop over and see Higgins who's on the *Sleuth* at the next dock."

Luckily Lieutenant Higgins was not out of the way, and in a moment Kennedy was in his cabin telling him that Pete and three other men had been shanghaied by the Spanish captain of the *Bonito*, and were now probably imprisoned in his cabin.

"The dago skunk!" snorted Higgins, "Hold on Cap, till I see if we have steam up. I'll fix him! I'll drop the *Sleuth* alongside of the *Bonito* and if the cutthroat rascal gives us any trouble, by the Eternal! I'll turn the rapid fire gun loose on him if I am court martialed for it. He shanghai Captain Pete! The infernal dago skunk!"

He whipped out, and in a second was back again, saying excitedly:

"The engineer has got a full head on, and I'm going to pull right out. Let's go on deck."

Under the lieutenant's vigorous management ten minutes brought the *Sleuth* around to the Queen's dock, and she came with a shock expressive of his

feelings, alongside of the *Bonito*. The rude jar shook the bark from stem to stern, and in a moment they saw Captain Madeira come out of his cabin, and lock the door behind him.

"What do you mean by running into my vessel?" he cried, coming to the side. Then he saw Kennedy standing by Higgins, and on the instant his face became a mottled, muddy white.

Kennedy and Higgins leapt aboard the *Bonito*, and the latter said to the Spaniard:

"Open that cabin door!"

"What for?" cried Madeira, recovering nerve from sheer desperation. "Are you robbers? I will call the police!"

Nevertheless he followed them without remonstrance as they went to the companion way. The lieutenant was about to repeat his demand when Kennedy said calmly:

"Never mind the key. I've got one."

Then he gave the door a tremendous kick, and sent it flying as if it had been driven from its hinges by a catapult. Higgins grasped Madeira by the arm, and hauled him in the wake of Kennedy who sprung down the steps, and into the cabin.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

PETE had recovered consciousness, and in struggling to raise himself had bumped his sore head, which had the effect of clearing his mind. He had just taken in his surroundings and discovered he was hand-cuffed, when he heard the welcome voice of Captain Kennedy calling:

"Pete! Where are you, boy?"

"Here!" he shouted.

The next moment Kennedy burst into the state-room followed by Lieutenant Higgins, who still held the arm of the Spanish captain. The latter had given up all idea of resistance.

"Are you badly hurt?" was Kennedy's first question.

"I guess not," Pete replied. "Get these irons off me, and I'll soon find out."

Kennedy drew a bunch of keys from his pocket, and selecting one relieved our hero of his bracelets:

"Tell me all about it," said he.

"Oh?" exclaimed Pete suddenly regaining his memory. "Joe Hanlon and his mates are imprisoned in the run. Haven't you heard them? They were making a thundering noise down there when I went to sleep, but they couldn't get out for the

steward had put the bar across the hatch. Where IS the steward? I hit *him*, anyway!"

Kennedy opened several of the staterooms that adjoined the first cabin, and finally answered:

"Here he is stretched out on the floor. His face seems pretty well smashed."

"Yes," rejoined Pete, smiling contentedly. "I bucked him when he tried to take my gun."

"I'll put your hand-cuffs—"

"They aren't mine!" interrupted Pete in some disgust.

"Well, at any rate, I'll put them on him. And I've got another pair here that will fit Captain Anton Madeira."

The captain of the *Bonito* made a sudden movement as if to break loose. Lieutenant Higgins dropped his arm and thrust his hand in his rear pocket:

"You Spanish hound," said he, "if you make one motion to resist I'll kill you in your tracks. I won't even soil my hands holding you any longer."

He spoke quietly, but there was deadly earnestness in his tone. Madeira glanced at him, and gave up all hope. His desperation was no match for the determination and nerve of the American officer. He silently extended his hands for the cuffs.

"Now," said Pete, who was on his feet and apparently as strong and clear-minded as ever.

"Where's Cloon? He was here when I received this crack!"

"I met him going up town," answered Kennedy. "As I was on my way here. He don't know of your rescue."

"Who does know?"

"No one, I guess, except us. There was no one on deck when I broke open the door. All hands are below, and on the dock probably."

Pete thought a minute.

"Lieutenant Higgins," said he, "don't let us put Captain Madeira and the steward in jail yet. We'll have Joe and the boys out of the run, and let them guard the Spaniards for awhile. I bought them guns in anticipation of trouble, and they are sturdy and honest fellows."

"Well, this appears to be your funeral, Pete," returned the lieutenant, "and you may do as you please if Kennedy thinks it all right. I don't quite see your object, tho'."

"I don't want it known that I am free," our hero replied. "I'll turn this cabin into a mousetrap to catch the man who put up this job, and whom Kennedy and I both want."

"That's a rattling good idea, Pete," said Kennedy. "He's sure to come here if he don't suspect trouble—or if he is not taken somewhere else."

"He won't be. And we've got to find out where the balance of that dope is to be turned over to Ah Wong."

"By the Hokey! You're right, boy," said Kennedy, regarding Pete with approval. "You have got the best head of any of us—if it is busted."

Lieutenant Higgins had listened to this conversation with a face full of astonishment:

"What the deuce are you fellows talking about? This business seems to be bigger than it looked at first. Who is this Cloon? And what has he to do with Ah Wong of Seattle and dope?"

"Higgins," said Kennedy, "I had to let you into part of this secret when I was forced to call on you to help get Captain Pete out of these fellows' hands. But you must take my word that it is neither Pete's nor my deal and we have no right to tell you any more. It is a matter of honor with both of us."

Higgins flushed through his tan, and began stiffly:

"If my character and record does not inspire you with sufficient confidence—" then the good humor natural to him, and his sense of fairness prevailed over his irritation—"Nonsense!" he burst out, "I won't get mad. But it's devilish hard to stay on a back seat, and see you fellows have all the fun."

Pete took his hand, and said:

"Thank you, lietuenant. We'd like mighty well to take you in, but we can't do it, and be honest with the others."

"Stay honest, then, d—n you!" said the sea dog heartily. "I'm going to take the launch back to

her old berth, but I'll keep steam up, and if you need help you know where to come."

As soon as he was gone Pete went to the hatch which barred the longshoremen from liberty, and called:

"Joe Hanlon, do you hear me? It is Captain Pete."

"Aye, aye, sir!" came in smothered tones from below.

"I am going to open the hatch."

"We're willin'!" said Con's voice.

Pete threw the bar aside, and lifted the hatch cover by the iron ring bolt in the middle. The three men bobbed into sight with almost ludicrous celerity. They were streaming with perspiration, and Joe was the first to speak:

"Now!" he exclaimed, "where is that thundering dago that shut us up in that hole? I'll kill him deader'n a salt cod!"

Kennedy and Pete appeased the angry sailor and explained the situation. They gladly constituted themselves the custodians of Madeira and the steward, and promised to act with the utmost vigilance and prudence until they were relieved. Then the revenue officer, after another consultation with our hero hunted up the mate. He showed him his badge, and warned him that the Captain of the *Bonito* was under arrest in his own cabin. He, the mate, was to finish his work the same as if the cap-

tain were still in command. This being arranged according to the revenue officer's desire, he returned to the cabin.

"Now," he said, "let me look at your head, Pete, and see if I cannot put you in better shape to show up on the street."

He took a pair of scissors and some sticking plaster from his pocketbook, and made Pete kneel before him:

"It was a glancing blow," he said, as he trimmed the hair from the scalp about the wound, "you'll be all right to-morrow."

Almost as he finished speaking, he had joined the jagged skin, and plastered it neatly and firmly together. When Pete put on his hat no one would have known of his adventure.

"I am going back to the hotel," announced he, "and if Andrews don't send me out, I'll rest until dark. Then I am coming down here again, for if Cloon gets past the rest of you, here's where he'll come. And this time, I'm going to hold *him* up."

Kennedy fairly grinned with satisfaction:

"By the Blind Eye of the Holy Crocodile!" cried he, "Pete, I love you. You do that."

They went together as far as the alley, and the officer sent for a cab in which Pete rode to the hotel with closed blinds. Andrews was absent, and Pete went to his room and lay down, for his head ached sadly.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

AS we know, Joe Cloon was on his way, with an easy mind, to see Ah Wong when he met Kennedy. There is a good sized Chinese quarter in Port Townsend which occupies a block not far distant from Water street. Joe knew his way, and when he entered one of the stores he was ushered with oriental courtesy to the presence of the Celestial he wished to see. Ah Wong was drinking rice brandy from a tiny but gorgeously ornamented cup. After a word of greeting Cloon said:

"I have just heard from Victoria. The opium has been already run into San Juan island, and there baled in hay. It will arrive this evening at the Queen's dock, and will be stored in the warehouse where I met you this morning. My business is about all done save delivering it, and receiving the money. Afterwards Aylward will turn over the balance of the dope, about one-third, which is in the cave in the cliff. I have told Sam to expect you shortly after midnight."

"It is well," replied the Chinaman. "Is the deal unsuspected?"

"Entirely so. A neater run, so far, was never made."

The Mongolian rubbed his hands with satisfaction. His share of the profits was large.

"Have you business?" he asked the lawyer. "Or will you be my guest until we go to the warehouse? I will entertain you after the fashion of my country."

"All right," agreed Cloon. "I think I'd as soon keep under cover."

A little after dark Pete, accompanied by the mastiff, crept from the alley along in the deep belt of shadow cast by the warehouse until he reached a pile of timber awaiting shipment at the end of the wharf. He and Dope secreted themselves in a position commanding the end of the warehouse and the dock in front of it. The *Bonito* had been anchored two hundred feet distant broad away from the wharf.

A half hour passed, and our hero only stirred to whisper to Dope, or ease his tired muscles. Then a red light came out of the darkness over the face of the waters, and a moment later a green one appeared alongside of it. A steamer was heading for the dock. Then the great doors of the freight shed swung wide and the agent and wharfinger came, and stood ready to take the line from the visitor. A whistle sounded, and the little tug churned up to the wharf, and was made fast. Pete saw that it was the *Success* of Whatcom, a tramp. The first man to leap ashore our hero recognized, with a deep thrill of exultation, as Jimmy, Ken-

nedy's little Scot. Pete looked, and the whole forward deck of the tug was piled high with bales of hay. His first impulse had been to catch the Scotchman, and demand his tidings. Now he felt there was no necessity. The hay told its own story. It was unquestionably that containing the opium baled at Bandman's barn, on San Juan island.

Pete's anxieties still clustered about Jimmy. Would he go in search of assistants, or remain and watch the dope? Hurra! he saw him step into the shadow, and conceal himself. He would not leave the opium.

Hurra again! Pete had the game in his own hands. Here was fifty thousand dollars worth of smuggled opium on the dock, and Pete the only one who possessed Cloon's secret—for Jimmy did not count. Hurra!!! While Andrews was chasing a wild goose at the cave, he, Pete, would capture ten thousand taels of opium, and the Chief of the Conspirators, Joe Cloon, and throw them into the collector's lap to do with as he pleased. Was ever Fortune so kind? Pete for an instant forgot all the difficulties, and his blood danced in his veins, and he felt like tossing his hat in the air.

Instead he suddenly shivered, and grew cold, for now Cloon himself came out thro' the warehouse door, and called to the captain:

"Is that hay consignment to Aylward & Co.?"

"Yes, sir. Queen's dock, Port Townsend."

"All right. Wharfinger, run it into the center

of the building, and tier it next to the small office. I have instructions in regard to it."

This suited Pete's views.

"But," he reflected, "this is too great a job for me to undertake alone. I wish Cap. Kennedy were here! However, Higgins is aboard the *Sleuth*. He is the man."

He slid from one shelter to another, and from covert to covert so quietly, followed by the dog, that they seemed shadows of the night appearing and disappearing as they were thrown by the fitful gleam of the wharf lantern. When at last Pete felt he was safe from observation, his fleet footsteps soon brought him to the side of the revenue launch. A red point glowed in the darkness on the quarter deck, and the boy made straight for it. In a moment he distinguished the odor of burning tobacco, and a quiet voice said:

"That you and the dog, Pete? What's up now?"

Our hero concisely informed the lieutenant that ten thousand taels of smuggled opium was baled in hay in the freight shed on the Queen's dock; that lawyer Cloon the smuggler, was with it, and intended to turn it over that night to a Portland syndicate represented by Ah Wong. And that as soon as the transfer was made he believed Cloon would try to set sail in the *Bonito*, now riding to a single anchor two hundred feet from the end of the wharf.

The lieutenant gave half a dozen vigorous puffs, and threw his cigar away.

"This is the sequel to the shanghai, is it? And what you wouldn't tell me this afternoon. Are you alone? Where's Kennedy?"

"Not in it! I am alone, and come to you for help. Cloon must be taken in the freight shed, where he will be for the next two hours."

"It's a muddle to me yet, Pete, and I don't half understand it. But I am going to take your word for it. Steam is up and I will have the *Sleuth* quietly dropped alongside the *Bonito* in case of accidents. You and I will do the business on the dock."

"That's right. That's precisely what I want, lieutenant."

Higgins gave his orders, and then Pete and he made their way to the alley-end of the warehouse. As they were about to enter by the small door Dope suddenly gave a repressed whimper, and the next instant Jimmy the Scot flitted by towards the street without detecting their presence. Pete thought it was just as well. They followed the opening between the piles of produce, cautiously feeling their way in the gloom, until they reached the interior office. A lighted lantern stood on the table, but no one was about. They concealed themselves opposite the open door, and waited.

This end of the warehouse was not filled with goods like the one they had traversed, and leading

from the office to the waterfront, where the *Success* was being unladen, was a passage way fully twenty feet wide. Down through this came the wharfinger and his assistant trucking the hay. It was tiered in a large empty space behind the bulkhead that formed the office. An hour concluded the work, and with the last bale the men dropped their trucks, and disappeared in the direction of the street. Their labor was done for the night.

A quarter of an hour passed, and then footsteps approached from the water side. In a moment more Cloon hove in sight accompanied by Ah Wong. They entered the office and sat down, the lawyer by the table.

"Well," he said, "the run is made, and safely. Those hundred and sixty bales of hay contain ten thousand taels of refined opium subject to your order."

His voice still lingered on the air when lieutenant Higgins followed by Captain Pete, noiselessly entered through the doorway. Cloon of course saw them the instant they crossed the threshold, but with wonderful self command he turned his impassive face, on which not even a flush of surprise appeared, and gazed at them silently. The Chinaman was stricken dumb, and his ashy features looked as tho' he had encountered a Gorgon.

The lieutenant's hand was raised, and the heavy revolver in it pointed unwaveringly at the arch-conspirator's head. Pete's gun was in his fingers

but his arm hung by his side, and he allowed Higgins to take the initiative. For twenty breaths away not a word was spoken, but the glances from the officer's and Cloon's eyes crossed like gleaming swords. Then like the shifting slide of a magic lantern, the lawyer's marble face became full of expression. It was mocking, devilish, and sinister, and the quality of his voice when he spoke was so cold and biting that Pete shivered, and tightened his grip on his pistol butt, doubtful if he had not better shoot this awful man at once. He felt as if they had brought a grizzly to bay.

"Lieutenant Higgins of the revenue launch *Sleuth*," said Cloon as tho' presenting them to Ah Wong, "and my young friend Captain Pete, the half-breed assistant of the Washington detective. Ah Wong, my friend, it looks as if the Portland syndicate would have to go without that dope this time."

For the hundredth part of a second Higgins lost his hold on Cloon's eyes as he glanced at the quaking Celestial. But that infinitesimal period of time was what the conspirator had calculated on, and it served his purpose. Lightning was not swifter in its action than the flash of his hand as it dashed the lantern from the table. Almost simultaneously Higgins' revolver barked twice. It was answered by a flash and report from the other side of the apartment, and the revenue officer gave a gasp and his weapon dropped to floor. Pete fired

a second after the last shot, apparently without effect. Then there was a sudden scurry of feet, a bay of rage, and a deep execration in Cloon's voice. Pete knew that Dope was at work, and rushed in the direction of the sound. Unfortunately the table was in his way, and he tumbled over it. At the same moment he heard a thud—as tho' a steer were being pole-axed—and a short howl of pain from the mastiff. There was another rush of feet—human, this time—out of the door and down the passage toward the water front. Pete scrambled to his feet, and gained the door. Blank darkness was before him, into which he shot twice, and then followed at top speed.

As he emerged from the warehouse, a boat shot out from the slip. He ran to the stringer at the end of the wharf, and saw Cloon standing in the stern sheets, and sculling with an easy and powerful play of the wrist that sent the boat ahead as if propelled by steam. Pete hesitated a heart-beat—swallowed a lump that arose in his throat—and then levelled his pistol, and shot twice before Cloon was blotted out in the darkness. An instant later there was a heavy splash and all was silent.

Trembling a little Pete hurried back to the office. It was time. A flickering light threw a dim radiance on the scene of the encounter. Some of the oil from the overturned lantern had sprinkled a bale of hay by the door, and now it blazed up like sudden wrath. Ah Wong was not to be seen.

Higgins was trying to raise himself on his knees:

"I'm winged, Pete," said he, "but don't be frightened. We'd better get out of here mighty sudden, and turn in an alarm at the nearest fire box. Did you get Cloon?"

"I don't know," answered Pete. "He got Dope."

The mastiff was lying on his back on the other side of the room, and whining faintly.

"Bring him along," said Higgins, tottering out of the doorway. "I can take care of myself."

By the time they had reached the street, and Pete turned in an alarm the blaze had licked its way through the shingles of the roof and was shooting tongues of flame towards the heavens. Before the fire department had a stream turned on, the whole warehouse, from end to end, was one roaring mass of fire.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN

IT is the next morning at the hotel. Captain Pete and Mr. Andrews were together in his room. The latter is speaking:

“Our work here is completed. What you tell me in regard to your encounter with Cloon last night in the burned warehouse, and the destruction of the opium in the conflagration, had better remain one of the many secrets that are hidden away in the archives of the customs service on this coast. Crimes are contagious, and it is wisest for the general good to bury them. It will surprise you to be told that the body of Cloon was washed up on the beach almost in front of the cave, this morning. There were two bullet holes in his breast not an inch apart. I am tempted to be sorry for him, for he was a great, tho’ evil, man. Collector Hogan has completely exonerated himself by the superb gallantry and cleverness of the capture of Aylward and five other less important smugglers at the cave last night. I was on the spot ready to act, and saw it all myself. I have been entirely misled in respect to him, and shall so report to the Government. In conclusion, let me say, Captain Pete, that in reviewing events from the light of this morning’s

knowledge, I find reason to suspect that you have all along helped Mr. Hogan toward his vindication. I am ready to believe that your motives have been creditable, but if it had not been for your extraordinary good luck, you might have made a botch of my plans. As it is, Cloon's death ends it all, and your part in that event—which winds up smuggling on a large scale on Puget Sound—absolves you from the blame I should otherwise feel disposed to attach to your conduct. This is the last word I shall say to you or any one on this matter. Our connection ceases to-day, and you are at liberty to return to Cortesana when you please. I shall tell Hogan his recommendation was warranted by your behavior while in my—or rather—the Government employ.”

“Mr. Andrews,” began Pete, who had been exceedingly uncomfortable during the latter part of this homily, “your generosity to me is so great that I feel bound to tell you I have long cherished an almost hopeless love for Grace Hogan, the Collector's daughter. With this key you may be able to interpret some of my actions in this Cloon conspiracy. But I feel now that I have been false—tho' never disloyal—to you, and the trust you placed in me.”

Andrews face took on a less serious expression:

“So that was it! That makes it clear. You wanted to save the father to make a claim on the

daughter. Not a bad scheme! Well, I forgive you; and this time without reservation, on condition that you invite me to the wedding."

THE END

A Tale of the Alamo

IN TEXAS WITH DAVY CROCKETT

By EVERETT McNEIL

A Story of the Texas War of Independence

Illustrated. 12mo \$1.50

The tale tells of the adventures of two boys, Trav and Tom, during that intensely dramatic and exciting period when Texas won her independence from Mexico—the most heroic in the history of America. The famous bear-hunter and backwoods statesman DAVY CROCKETT, and the even more famous SAM HOUSTON, are the two leading historical characters in the story, while WILL TRAVIS, the ill-fated FANNIN, JIM BOWIE, of bowie-knife fame, DEAF SMITH, the famous Texan scout, and other characters well known in Texan history, play important, if minor, parts in the tale.

The story begins a few weeks before the battle of the Alamo—one of the most heroic in all history ; carries the reader through the scenes of this battle and the still more terrible Goliad, and reaches its final climax in the battle of San Jacinto, where General Houston practically annihilates the Mexican army, captures Santa Anna himself, and wins the Independence of Texas.

Great care has been taken to have all historical data correct, and to give accurate pictures of the men and the times, while, at the same time, telling a story that will deeply interest the boy reader and make him anxious to go to his history in order to learn more of the heroic men in whose deeds it is hoped the tale has given him almost a personal interest.

E. P. DUTTON & CO., Publishers

31 West Twenty-third Street, New York

THE HERMIT OF THE CULEBRA MOUNTAINS

**Or, THE ADVENTURES OF TWO SCHOOLBOYS
IN THE FAR WEST**

By EVERETT McNEIL

Illustrated. 12mo, cloth, . . . \$1.50

The story of a hunting trip in the Culebra Mountains, awarded to two boys as the prize for the most manly conduct in the Yahara High School for the term then ending.

Harry Ashton and Dick Orson win the prize and under Captain Kent's guidance start for the mountains. They make the acquaintance of cowboys and Indians in the foothills and when riding out from a ranch with the little daughter of the rancher are captured and threatened with torture by Indians. The chief and others of the band are killed by some mysterious agency, and they are rescued by the Hermit of the Culebra Mountains, taken up into his marvelous tree-top home, where they are besieged by the Indians; they in turn rescue the cowboys who had followed the Indians, then all go through a series of startling adventures and danger. The secret of the Hermit is revealed. When in flight from the burning fortress of the Hermit they catch a glimpse of a secret treasure cave of the ancients, but are forced to continue their flight.

A thoroughly real story of the wild western life when the cowboy and the Indian were natural enemies and the golden halo of romance held up the western country as the El Dorado of adventure and enterprise to the healthy-minded man and boy.

E. P. DUTTON & CO., Publishers

31 West Twenty-third Street, New York

THE LOST TREASURE CAVE

**Or, ADVENTURES WITH THE COWBOYS OF
COLORADO**

By EVERETT McNEIL

Illustrated. 12mo, cloth, . . . \$1.50

The story of two Wisconsin schoolboys, who go to southern Colorado to secure a vast treasure known to be hidden in a great cave—are captured by Indians, but give the Indians the fright of their lives and escape—take part in a most exciting cowboy Fourth of July celebration—kill a wounded buffalo bull just in time to save a young girl's life—are kidnapped by desperadoes, who are also after the treasure, taken to the mountains and threatened with death and torture—enter the marvelous Treasure Chamber of the Dead Kings, and find—but, let the story itself tell what they found.

A wholesome tale that will interest boys, and give them true pictures of cowboy life on the plains of Colorado before the buffaloes were driven away and when the Indians and the desperadoes were still an ever-present danger.

E. P. DUTTON & CO., Publishers

31 West Twenty-third Street, New York

BOOKS BY COLONEL H. R. GORDON

LOGAN, THE MINGO

A Story of the Frontier. 12mo, cloth, gilt top, illustrated \$1.50

RED JACKET, THE LAST OF THE SENECA

12mo, cloth, gilt top, illustrated \$1.50

An exciting story of scouts and Indians in the expedition sent against the Six Nations in the year 1779.—*The Outlook*.

A regular Indian story is "Red Jacket, the Last of the Senecas," by Colonel H. R. Gordon, author of three other popular books of Indian life and adventure. The scene is laid in central and western New York and covers the invasion of the country of the Six Nations by General Sullivan in 1779.—*Boston Transcript*.

PONTIAC, CHIEF OF THE OTTAWAS

A Tale of the Siege of Detroit. 12mo, cloth, gilt top, illustrated \$1.50

It presents a skilful study of the famous Indian's individuality, conveyed without sacrificing the rapid movement and engrossing interest of the narrative. And both as bearing upon history and as an interpretation of character the book is of a high order, while its interest grows to the close.—*Congregationalist*.

OSCEOLA, CHIEF OF THE SEMINOLES

Illustrated. 12mo, cloth, gilt top \$1.50

There are no tales that interest boys more than Indian tales, and this is one of the best sort, exciting and varied, yet founded on fact and life-like.—*N. Y. Observer*.

This lively and adventurous tale of the Seminole War will delight the hearts of all American boys. We are glad, too, to observe that the gallant author has the courage to tell the truth of the base treachery by which the great chief was ultimately captured. We wish there were more books like this for boys, and we cannot close without paying our compliments to the publishers on the pleasing dress in which they have given it to the public.—*Church Standard*.

TECUMSEH, CHIEF OF THE SHAWANOE

12mo, cloth, gilt top, illustrated, 312 pages \$1.50

Colonel Gordon contributes a well-written story of the famous Indian chief "Tecumseh," which is an important book for every boy and girl to read carefully. It is far more than a book of entertainment, it is history told in a most fascinating way and full of information.—*Churchman*.

There is a great deal of life, action, stirring adventure in the story, with much desirable historical pabulum.—*Buffalo Commercial*.

E. P. DUTTON & CO., Publishers
31 West Twenty-third Street, New York



